



G. Vertue Sculp.

*The R^t. Rev^d. Father in God. Thomas Kenn DD.
late Lord Bishop of Bath & Wells. Anno. Etat. 73.*

Kenn (T) Bishop of Bath & Wells.

A
CROWN of GLORY,
THE
Reward of the Righteous.
BEING,
MEDITATIONS
UPON

The Vicissitude and Uncertainty of all
Sublunary Enjoyments;

V I Z.

- I HONOURS, RICHES, and PLEASURES.
- II. The Nature and Causes of AFFLICTIONS.
- III. The Great Benefit and Advantage of
AFFLICTIONS.
- IV. Of Our Resignation to the WILL of GOD.

To which is ADDED,

A MANUAL of Devotions, for Times of
Trouble and Affliction.

ALSO,

*Meditations and Prayers for the Holy Communion,
Both Before, At, and After Receiving.*

WITH

Some General Rules and Directions for Our Daily Practice

Composed for the Use of a Noble FAMILY.

By the Right Rev^d Dr. THOMAS KENN,
late Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells.

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To * * * *

S I R,



Ermit me, I beseech You, to lay at your Feet this small MANUAL, which has no other Design but the supporting of You under those Calamities which You have borne with so much Magnanimity, Patience, and Christian Resolution ; for I cannot conceive (whatever some may think) that Your being of another Persuasion than my self, can discharge me from my Duty to You. And I hope You will not the less regard what I have here written, because I profess my self, as I always did, to be a Member and an Unworthy Son of the Church of England : For as it has always been my Judgment, that he that Believes, Lives and Prays, according to the Rules that Christ has given us, is a True Christian, and a happy Man ; so I believe that the next Way

DEDICATION.

to Heaven is not to look after Controversy, but Conscience ; and to spend our Zeal and Time not in being Contentious, but Religious: And therefore wheresoever I live in the Christian World, whether East or West, it is not my being a good Scholar that will make me happy, but a good Christian ; not a Learned Disputant for Christ, but a Devout Servant to him : Nor the being of such or such a Party or Side in the Church, but a True Member of his Body.

AND if You would Vouchsafe to bear with me a little, I could easily demonstrate this to be the most safe Way : For, if I am Regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and made a Christian by true Baptism, believing the Scriptures ; can it with any Colour of Reason be supposed that I shall suffer Damnation for not equally believing Traditions ? And if I make Conscience to serve and worship GOD, can it be thought I shall perish for not worshipping Images ? If I pray to GOD, as our Blessed Saviour hath taught us, saying, Our Father, &c. who can think I should incur the Sentence of Damnation for not Invocating Saints and Angels ?
And

DEDICATION.

And if I receive the holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ in both Kinds, according to Christ's Institution, as even the Roman Church confesses ; who can believe I shall be damned, because the Cup is taken away by a Council?

THESE things I urge with all Humility, only to let You see what Reason I have to believe the Protestant Religion to be the most safe Way : And with the utmost Earnestness, I shall offer up my poor Petitions, That the Divine Goodness would graciously support You under those great and many Troubles wherewith it has pleased Him to exercise You here ; and at last to translate You to a Crown of Immarcessible Glory. Which is the daily and sincere Prayer of,

Your most Faithful,

And Obedient Servant,

THO. KENN.

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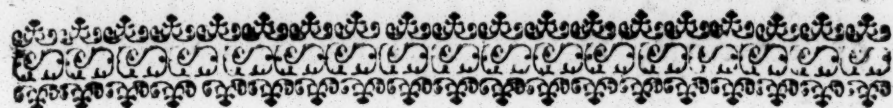
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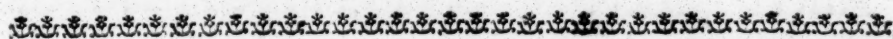
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MEDITATIONS, &c.



INTRODUCTION.



HAVING with Grief of Heart, observed that uninterrupted Series of Affliction that has attended a very Noble Family, I have thought it my Duty, by the ensuing Meditations, to cast my Mite into this Illustrious Treasury, and by considering the Vicissitude and Uncertainty of all Sublunary States and Things, to offer some support under that Weight of Sorrow, which Minds less Magnanimous than those of Persons so Conspicuous, would have sunk under long ago.

AND since the Holy Scriptures do inform us, that *afflictions rise not out of*

*the ground, neither does trouble spring out of the dust, it will not be unnecessary to enquire into the Cause from whence all our great and fore Calamities arise ; for as in the Case of a diseased Body, to know the Cause from whence the Morbifick-Affect proceeds, is accounted half the Cure ; so if by a thorough Search we can come to know the Cause why it has pleased the Sovereign Majesty of Heaven to bring and to continue these Calamities upon us, it may (accompanied with the Divine Blessing) go a great way towards the Removal of them : There being nothing more certain, than that the Way to have our offended Maker reconciled unto us, is, *To search our hearts, and try our ways, and to turn unto him against whom we have sinned ;* and so may we hope he will have Mercy upon us, and say to the proud Waves of Affliction that have so long been rolling over our Heads, *Thus far have ye gone, but ye shall proceed no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stopped :* For the same G O D that puts a stop to the Raging of the Sea, can*

can soon put a Period to the Madness of the People, and bring back our Captivity as the Streams in the South.

NOW, since the Loss of what we formerly enjoy'd, is that which makes us the most Uneasy, and gives us the greatest Disquiet, I will first Endeavour to remove it, by giving you a Scheme of the Vanity and Emptiness of all those things; and consequently that it is not worth our while to afflict our selves for the Loss of that which is so fading and transitory in its own Nature, and when enjoy'd in its greatest Advantages, adds so very little to our Happiness: Which things are properly reducible to Three Heads, *viz.* *Honours, Riches, and Pleasures*, which I shall distinctly consider in Meditations upon each. And that what I write may be the more effectual to the End for which it is written, I shall address myself to the Divine Majesty for a Blessing thereupon.

A P R A Y E R.

O Most Gracious and Blessed GOD,
 who art the Source and Fountain
 of all Blessings, without whose gracious In-
 fluence, the best of all our Performances will
 neither bring glory to thee, nor profit to our
 selves; Look down, we pray thee, in Mercy
 upon us, and let this Work be so attended
 with thy Blessing, that it may be efficacious
 through thy Grace, to take off our Hearts
 and Affections from the love of those things
 of which thou hast justly depriv'd us for
 our Sins; that so we may now with more
 earnestness and intenseness of Soul, seek af-
 ter those things that cannot be taken from
 us; to which end, we pray thee, shew us
 the emptiness of all present things, whether
 they be Honours, Riches, or Pleasures; and
 that Thou only art that chief Good which
 alone can satisfy our Souls: Hear us, O
 Lord, and help us, for Jesus Christ his
 sake: And let these Words of our Mouths,
 and Meditations of our Hearts, be accep-
 table in thy sight, O LORD our GOD, and
 our Redeemer. Medi-

Meditation I.

Of the Vanity and Uncertainty of Honour.

T H E R E is certainly nothing so convincing as our own Experience ; and if we truly consider it, it is no small Advantage that we reap even by our Losses, if thereby we come to be convinc'd of the Vanity of that which we have lost. For such is the Deceitfulness of our Hearts, and the Corruption of our Natures, that while we are in the Possession of any outward Good, we are loth to let it go ; and tho' we find no real Good in it, we are yet so much pleas'd with it, as to endeavour with all our Might to retain it : And let us hear from the Ministers of GOD's Word never so long and learned Harangues of the Vanity and Uncertainty of them, we are unwilling to believe them. But when the Storm of GOD's Anger is come upon us, and the Tempest of his Wrath hath cover'd us, and taken from us, our King, our Queen,

Queen, our Princes and Nobles, all our pleasant and delectable Things; we by our own Experience come to see that Honour is but an empty Puff of Air, that it is only *Vox & preterea nihil*, a Voice and nothing else; and that *all is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*.

BUT to come a little more particularly to shew the Vanity of Honour: What Certainty is there in that, which consists in popular Applause, and depends on the Breath of the Vulgar? Well may it be compar'd to Wind, for with every Wind it changes: Did not the common People change their Notes like the Wind, even to our Saviour himself? How did they cry *Hosanna* one Day, and the next *Crucify him*? Now the blessed Jesus is esteem'd a *Prophet* by 'em, and anon reputed a *Samaritan that hath a Devil*. Nor had his Followers less Experience of the Inconstancy of the People: When *St. Paul* escap'd Shipwreck, and was cast upon the Island call'd *Melita*, a Viper fasten'd on his Hand, which made the People take him for a *Murderer*; but
when

when they saw him shake it off, without doing him any harm, they changed their Minds, and said he was a God : And the same *St. Paul*, accompanied with *St. Barnabas*, were at another Time first honoured with Paganish Devotion, as tho' they had been *Jupiter* and *Mercury*, and soon after stoned, as tho' they were Malefactors. Again, *St. Paul* and *Silas* were one time imprison'd in the lowest Dungeon at *Philippas*, and afterwards honour'd and ador'd of the same Goaler that was their Executioner : Even as our blessed Lord was honour'd of the same *Judas* that was his Betrayer, and of the same *Pilate* that was his Condemner. How lamentable was the Case of *Zedekiah*, who of King of *Judah*, was made a Captive to the King of *Babylon*, and put in Chains ; he had indeed for a short time his Eyes spared, but it was only that he might behold the dreadful Slaughter of his Children, and then the Light of his Eyes were obscur'd in utter Darknes : O lamentable Vicissitude of Worldly Honours ! When Crowns and Scepters are
tumbled

tumbled under Foot! And Royal Blood is shed like Water on the Ground, that can't be gather'd up again! How soon was *Pharoah* tumbled from his Triumphant Chariot, (when he pursu'd the *Israelites*) and was made food for Fishes, and all his Pomp lay buried in the Sea! The like unhappy, but just Fate, befel *Adonibezek*, who from a great and a puissant King, was disgracefully mangled in his Hands and Toes, and forc'd to eat such Crumbs as fell under the Table, like a Dog. And *Agag* likewise, another Royalet, was hewn in Pieces like an Ox, even when he thought the bitterness of Death was past. And *Jezabel* (who well deserv'd her fate) tho' a great Queen her self, and a King's Daughter, was eaten up and gnaw'd by Dogs like Carrion. Nay, the great *Nebuchadnezzar*, that Universal Monarch of *Chaldea*, whilst he was hugging of himself in his own Happiness, and contemplating the Glory of his Kingdom, and the Honour of his Majesty, was turn'd out of his Palace, and forc'd to graze like a brute Beast in his
own

own Park. See here the Instability of worldly Honour! And what prodigious changes a Moment can produce! When from the highest Pinnacle of Glory, a mighty King whom all the World obey'd, is turn'd a Grazing with the very Beasts!

NOR do we find that prophane Histories are wanting in producing numerous Examples of the Uncertainty of worldly Greatness, and how airy a Nothing the Breath of Honour is: Of which one fatal Instance is that of the great *Bajazet* the Emperor of the *Turks*, who like a Wolf, or some wild Beast of prey, was carried up and down by conquering *Tamberlain*, in an Iron Cage, and expos'd to that Contempt which he thought worse than Death; and therefore to release himself, he knock'd out his Brains against the Bars of the Cage in which they kept him. *Valerian* the Emperor was another Instance likewise, who as a Slave and Vassal to *Sapores* King of *Persia*, was forc'd to hold his Stirrop whilst he got up an Horseback, as 'tho' he had been Pope. And even amongst Christi-

ans, *Frederick* the Third, one of the best of Emperors, was trod upon by *Alexander* the Sixth, one of the worst of Popes, in *St. Mark's Church* in *Venice*, as if he had been an Asp or a Basilisk, the Pope most blasphemously using these Words, *Thou shalt tread upon the Lion and the Adder, the Young Lion and the Dragon shalt thou trample under feet.* Nor is it without a just Compassion to be remembered, that the Emperor *Mauritius* had his Empress and his Children slain before his Eyes, by that bloody *Phocas*, his Servant, who, after he had slain his Master, and usurp'd his Empire, was countenanc'd in all his Villany by the Pope, because he stil'd him universal Bishop. This sudden Change of Fortune likewise, besel the aged *Priam* King of *Troy*, and *Palaeologas* the Emperor of *Constantinople*, when these two famous Cities were destroy'd, the one by the *Greeks*, the other by the *Turks*: These and many more great Ones in the World, have been suddenly thrown down from the Top of all their worldly Glory, to the
most

most Abject Condition ; and cast, as was threatned to *Capernaum*, from the Heaven of highest Exaltation, to the Hell of lowest Confusion.

BUT we have no need to cross the Seas for Examples of this nature ; our own Chronicles afford us fatal Instances : Witness *Edward* and *Richard* the Second, both Kings of *England* ; who found by a too sad Experience, there was but a small Distance between the Prisons and the Graves of Princes---- And to come nearer to our Times ; I need not question but there are many still alive, who can remember *Charles* the First, the Potent Monarch of Three Opulent and once Flourishing Kingdoms, O'ercome by His Rebellious Barbarous Subjects, and shedding, at His own Palace-Gates, His Royal Blood upon a Scaffold by the Hangman's Hands.---- This is indeed too sad an Instance of the Uncertainty of Worldly Honours ! To see the Fountain of it thus barbarously Butcher'd under a Pretence of Justice, as if he had not been the Lord's Anointed ! The

very thoughts on't fills my Soul with Horror, so that my Trembling Hand can hardly hold my Pen; and I cou'd even wish *my Head were Waters, and my Eyes a Fountain of Tears, that I might weep Day and Night*, for the Untimely Tragick Fall of this Illustrious Martyr; and well may He be call'd so, since He Dy'd for His so firm Adherence to the Church of *England*: Yet neither the Sacredness of his Majesty, which in His lowest Ebb of Fortune, shin'd brighter than the Diadem He wore, nor all His God-like Innocence, were able to preserve Him from being made a Victim for His People; nor hinder the Breath of our Nostrils, the Anointed of the Lord, from falling into the Hands of the vilest of Men. Well therefore might *Solomon* say, *There is one Event both to the Righteous and the Wicked; and that no man can know Good or Evil by any thing that is before him in this Life*: For we daily see *the Race is not to the Swift, nor the Battel to the Strong, nor Bread to the Wise, nor Riches to Men of Understanding*: *But Time and Chance happens unto all.*

BUT

BUT whither has my Grief Transported me? The Consideration of the Father's Death, has kept me from Deplo-
ring the unhappy Fate of His Son, my
Royal Master ; who is yet a fresher In-
stance of the Mutability of Worldly Ho-
nours ; who from all the Pomp and Splen-
dor of a Crown, with which we have seen
His Royal Head incircled, has been forc'd
to seek for Shelter in a Foreign Country,
and live upon the Alms of others : And
that the Church of *England*, (who until
now has had no Blot upon her) shou'd
be concern'd in such a Revolution, even
that Church for whom His Royal Father
dy'd a Martyr, is that which most of all
amazes me.

BUT this abundantly confirms this
Truth, That no Estate of Man on this
side Heaven, is free from Mutability and
Changes ; and sufficiently shews how
vain a thing it is for any Man to place
his Felicity and Happiness in Eminency
of Dignity, and high Exaltation, since in
the Twinkling of an Eye all human
Glory may be laid in the Dust, and the

Sun of Honour either Set, or Eclips'd, or Clouded in Ignominy and Disgrace ; as the hot gleaming Sun oft turns into a sudden Storm ; like the Honour of Proud *Haman*, that was taken from Feasting with the King and Queen, and immediately hang'd upon the Gallows.

AND as the Slipperiness of Honour is always an Allay to the Enjoying of it, and extremely debases and lessens its Value ; so likewise is the little Satisfaction it gives us when we do Enjoy it : What Content did it give *Haman*, tho' he was the King's peculiar Favourite, and that his Seat was set above all the Princes of *Persia*, and reverenc'd and bow'd to by all the King's Servants ? So far was he from being Contented with the Honour that he had, that he never Enjoy'd it ; it availed him nothing, because *Mordecai* the *Jew* did not bow to him and give him Reverence. Honour is very apt (unless it be kept within due Bounds by supernatural Grace) to puff up the Minds of Men, so that they often forget both God and themselves ; They are ready
to

to think of themselves above what they ought, when they find that all Mens Knees are bowing down to 'em. *Herod* found Honour a very fatal thing to him ; when the People honour'd him, and cry'd, *'Tis the Voice of a God!* He was so impious to take that Honour to himself, and gave not God the Glory ; and therefore God soon made him know he was a mortal Man ; for he was immediately smitten with Worms and Dy'd, and all his Honour was cover'd with the greatest Ignominy. It indeed renders a Man more unsafe, for the higher any Man is plac'd, the more Enemies he has, and the more he is liable to be attack'd ; yea, the more obnoxious he is to those that seek his Ruin. The lofty Oaks are sooner ruin'd by the stroke of Thunder, than the humble Shrubs : He that stands upon a Pinnacle, tho' he may be gaz'd at by the Crowd, stands more unsafe than he that walks upon the ground, and passes unobserv'd. *Solomon* tells us, That Honour is not seemly for a Fool, and yet it oftentimes becomes their Portion. When

Men are laden with much Honour, they have need to be well Balasted with Wisdom, lest they be Over-set. Besides, what Satisfaction is there in those things of which we can have no Assurance of Enjoyment? What Comfort can a Man take in a House, when he is but a Tenant at Will, and may be turn'd out, at the Pleasure of his Landlord, at an Hour's warning? What Content has he that Pitcheth his Tent on the Sand, ready to be wash'd away with the rolling of every Sea? And what greater Certainty is there in Honours, which, like the Spokes of a Wheel, are now Uppermost, and immediately after at the Bottom? How often have we seen the Sun shine bright and gloriously, when the next moment, thro' the interposing of some envious Cloud, 'tis muffled up in Darkness. There also is another thing that makes Honour less Honourable; and that is, when it is not honourably obtain'd; for if Honour be worth any thing, it is when 'tis the Guerdon and Reward of Virtue: 'Twas this that made at first a Difference among
Men:

Men : Those that had done great things for the Publick, and deserv'd well of their Country, had a peculiar Mark of Honour put upon them, as the just Reward of their Merits ; and this it was that made 'em truly Honourable. But afterwards, as Men degenerated more and more, so Honour became Mercenary, and thereby lost its Value : And that indeed has been the chiefest cause of Envy's Lacquying after it : For when Men were preferr'd above their Brethren, whose Worth and Merit came far short of theirs, they straightway Envy'd 'em, as Men unworthy of the Honour they possess'd : What Honour can we think that Man deserves, who by Extortion and Oppression has amass'd together a vast sum of Money, and with that Money purchas'd Honour ? It must surely be an ill Purchase that's encumber'd with a Curse ; and that Honour cannot but prove ruinous, that's built on Ruins.

I do confess I have been much affected, when I have consider'd how some Persons very meanly born, Sons of the Earth, and taken from the Dunghil, have been

rais'd from their Original Dust, and set up with Princes: Such were *Maximinus*, *Probus*, *Aurelius*, *Pertinax*, and others; who from common Soldiers became Emperors; *Jephthah* and *Abimelech*, tho' Bastards, were both Renowned Generals, and famous for their Arms; and the Norman Duke *William*, whom we call *William the Conqueror*, was one of the same Classis. So likewise *Peter Comestor*, *Gratian* the Collector of the Decretals, *Lumbard* the Master of the Sentences, first Founder of School Divinity, were all the Bastards of Nuns, and all Famous for Arts. *Agathocles* was the Son of a Potter, *Abdolominus* a Gardiner, *Iphicrates* and *Marius* meanly born, and yet came to be Kings of *Sicily*, *Syria*, and great Potentates. And what shall we say to *Saul* and *David*, of whom Sacred Writ tells us, *His adde Saulum & Davidem, Asinus & Oves passenter ad Regnum pervenientes*; the one was taken from seeking Asses, and the other from following of Sheep, and advanc'd to the Kingdom, 1 *Sam.* 9. and 16. How strange was

was the Exaltation of *Cosmus de Medicis* of *Florence*, whom *Machiazel* in his *Florentine History* tells us, liv'd all his Youth obscure and miserable; when on a sudden the Sun of his Glory shin'd forth, as from under a Cloud? How was *Hunniades* fetch'd out of a Prison, and *Henry* the Third, of *Portugal*, out of a Poor Monastery, to be Crowned Kings?

THESE are so many Instances of the great Uncertainty that all Men meet with here in their Pursuit of Honour: Some are the Favourites of Providence, and from a mean Condition rais'd to the highest Pinnacle of Worldly Glory; whilst others from the Summit of their Hopes, have in a Moment's time been thrown into Despair, and all the glittering Brightness of their Crowns have only serv'd to light 'em to Destruction.

AND yet tho' most Men so unweariedly pursue this gaudy Idol Honour, let us a little now consider what 'tis they are the better for't. And one would think that those whom Nature sends into the World with Crowns upon their Heads,

Heads, and Sceptres in their Hands, that from their Birth are plac'd in such a Sphere of Glory that they have nothing more to wish for, have all the cause that may be to esteem themselves happy : And yet if we Enquire of them, whether the Dignities that they Enjoy, and the high Station they are in, has made 'em happy ? They'll tell us the quite contrary. No Good whatever can make a Man happy, without it be permanent and lasting ; and whatever 'tis that is not so, must needs leave the Soul short of Happiness : And that Honours, I mean Worldly Honours, are not permanent, is what I have already prov'd by many, and some too fatal Instances : And yet this is not all, for while they do Enjoy 'em, they find their Crowns are lin'd with Care, and sometimes made of Thorns ; nay, oftentimes the Sceptre that they wield proves but a Reed, and cannot be depended on. And can we think such Crowns and Sceptres can Cure the Chagrin of the Mind, or keep off Cares and Griefs from hovering about 'em ?

No,

No, on the contrary, it is the Crown that brings 'em, and the Sceptre that attracts 'em. O *Crown*, said the great *Persian* Monarch, *He that did but know how heavy thou fittest on the Head, would hardly take thee up, tho' he shou'd meet thee on his way.* This Prince gave Law to the whole World, and each Man's Fortune was what he pleas'd to make it; and therefore to appearance cou'd give to every Man Content; and yet he here confesses he wanted it himself. And what better Account can the rest give us, if they will speak their Minds Impartially? And here I will not ask of *Dionysius* the Tyrant of *Sicily*, who was more content with a handful of Twigs, to Whip the little Children of *Corinth* in a School, than with the Sceptre wherewith he had beaten all *Sicily*: Nor will we ask of *Sylla*, who having robb'd the Commonwealth of *Rome*, (which had her self before robb'd the whole World) never found means of Rest in himself: Nor, to come nearer home, will we Enquire of *Charles* the Royal Martyr, the Lustre of
 whose

whose Crown did only serve to Tempt his Enemies, not only to take it from his Head, but even to take his Head off too; and whose Sceptre was too weak to overcome the Force of Armed Rebels: Nor will we ask of his two Exil'd Sons, of which the Eldest endur'd twelve Years of Banishment, e're he Enjoy'd his Crown; and he who still survives, warn'd by his Royal Father's Tragick End, was forc'd to fly for Refuge to a Neighbouring Monarch, whose Generous Goodness has ever since supported him. It is of none of these Unhappy Princes that we will ask what Happiness they found in Honours: But surely *Solomon* may very well be Esteem'd capable of giving the best Answer to this Question; who had arriv'd to all the Honour that the World is capable of giving, both with respect to his singular Wisdom, which without doubt made him a very competent Judge of this matter; as well as for that vast Affluence of Riches which he had amass'd together; and more especially for that largeness of heart he had to make use of it:

it : And yet this is the *Summa Totalis* of all his Honour and Glory, That *all is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*.

BUT because we will have more than one Man's Opinion, let us ask of the Emperor *Augustus*, who Peaceably possess'd the whole World, and we shall hear him bewailing his Life past, and among infinite Toils wish for the Rest of the meanest of his Subjects; esteeming that a happy Day, that would ease him of his insupportable Greatness, and suffer him to live quietly among the least.

AND if we Enquire of *Tiberius* his Successor, he will tell us, *That he holds the Empire as a Wolf by the Ears ; and that, if he cou'd do it without danger of being bitten, he wou'd gladly let it go : Complaining of Fortune for lifting him so high, and then taking away the Ladder that he cou'd not get down.*

IF we ask *Dioclesian*, a Prince of great Wisdom and Virtue, in the Opinion of the World; he will prefer his voluntary Banishment at *Solona*, before all the *Roman Empire*.

AND,

AND, to conclude this Head, if we Enquire of the Emperor *Charles* the Fifth, who is generally esteem'd the most happy that hath liv'd these many Ages, He will Curse his Conquests, Victories and Triumphs; and not be asham'd to own, That he hath felt more good in one day of his Solitude, than in all his Triumphant Life.

NOW how can we imagine those happy in this imaginary Honour and Greatness, who think themselves unhappy in it? And especially, since they profess that Happiness consists in being Lesser, and not Greater. In a word, whatever Happiness, Honour and Ambition promiseth, it is nothing else but suffering of much Evil to get more. Men think by daily climbing higher to make themselves happy, and yet the height whereunto they so painfully aspire, is the height of Misery it self.

BUT having thus consider'd both the Uncertainty and Vanity of Worldly Honour, it is necessary to see what use is to be made of it, before we proceed any farther.

The

The Soul's Expostulation.

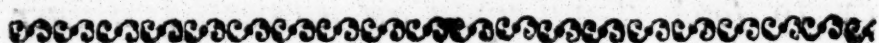
AND now, O my Soul, why shou'dst thou Disquiet thy self for the loss of that which is not worth the keeping? If the Possession of it cou'd add nothing to thy Happiness, what hast thou to complain of, now 'tis lost? Is it not better to enquire what just Title thou hadst to it, than to repine at the loss of it? If thy Honour was the Reward of Virtue, it is still thy own; for whilst the Cause continues, (which is Virtue) the Effect can't cease; and then thou hast no reason to complain: But if thy Honour came from any other Cause, thou truly never hadst any real Honour, it only was an empty Name, and nothing else: For it is Virtue is the Life and Soul of Honour. Thou oughtest therefore, O my Soul, to look well before thou leap'st into the Chair of Honour; or else the higher thou climbest, the lower thou fallest: If Virtue prefer thee, then Virtue will preserve thee; But if Gold or Favour do
advance

advance thee, thy Honour is but pinn'd upon the Wheel of Fortune, and when that Wheel shall turn, thy Honour falls, and thou remain'st an everlasting Monument of thy own Ambitious Folly. If therefore thou desire, O my Soul, to purchase Honour with thy Wealth, consider first how that became thine : If thy Labour got it, let thy Wisdom keep it ; if Oppression found it, let Repentance restore it ; and if thy Parents left it, let thy Virtues deserve it. For if thou art a Palace, Honour (like the Sun-beams) will make thee more Glorious ; but if thou art a Dunghil, the Sun may shine upon thee, but it cannot sweeten thee : Thy Prince may give thee Honour, but not make thee honourable. The best way therefore, O my Soul, is to despise that empty Nothing which the World calls Honour ; and seek after that Honour which none can Rob thee of, or take away ; and that is, in a word, to seek the Honour which GOD gives : For they that honour Him, He has promis'd to honour ; whereas they that despise Him shall be lightly esteemed.

A P R A Y E R.

O Almighty and most gracious Lord God, who alone rulest in the Kingdoms of Men, and suffereſt one to be plucked down, and another to be ſet up, as beſt ſeemeth good in thy ſight: Thou givest, and thou takeſt away, bleſſed be thy holy Name for ever. O Lord, be pleaſed in Mercy to look down upon an unworthy Sinner now before thee; and graciously ſupport me under the preſent Diſpenſation of thy Providence, and quiet my Soul under thy Wiſe and Sovereign Diſpoſal of all Affairs; and make me willing to ſuffer whatever it ſhall pleaſe thee to inflict upon me; O Lord, make me ſenſible that thou haſt dealt favourably with me, and haſt puniſh'd me leſs than mine Iniquities deſerved: I do confeſs I have been too much puffed up with that Honour which comes from Man, which therefore I am juſtly deprived of; and O that now thou wouldſt help me to take ſhame to my ſelf, and henceforth to ſee after that Honour which comes from God only. That

so unfeignedly turning to thee by true Contrition and Amendment of Life, Thou also may'st graciously return unto me, with Mercy and with Loving-kindness. Hear, O Lord, and help, and answer, for the sake of Jesus Christ thy blessed Son, and my alone Saviour: To whom, with thee, O Father, and the holy Spirit, be ascribed all Honour, and Glory, and Power, henceforth and for evermore. Amen. Our Father, &c.



Meditation II.

On the Uncertainty of Riches.

THERE is nothing in the World more certain than the Uncertainty of Riches; therefore it is that the Apostle St. Paul calls 'em *Uncertain Riches*, bidding us *not to trust in uncertain Riches, but in the Living G O D*. And though there be many in the World that make Wings for Riches, I mean, that study and contrive how to spend it, as thinking they shall never be poor, yet they need
not

not be so much concern'd about that, and might well save themselves that Labour, for whether they make them Wings or no, *Solomon* tells us that *Riches will make themselves Wings, and fly away*; yes, says he, they will fly so far as never to return any more, for they will fly as an *Eagle towards Heaven*: Riches are such Volatile things, as he compares them to Non-Entities; *Wilt thou*, says he, *set thy Heart on that which is not*? Riches are like Quicksilver, so Volatile, there's no fixing of 'em; for they fly away, when their Possessors think themselves as sure of 'em (having them close Prisoners in Bags and Bolts, under Lock and Key) as the *Romans* thought themselves of the Goddess *Victoria*, when they clipp'd her Wings, and wall'd her within their City. And tho' in this respect also our own Experience is more convincing than a Thousand Witnesses, yet will it not be amiss to recite some Examples of the Uncertainty and Emptiness of Worldly Riches; and the rather, that we may see there is nothing has befallen us in the late Revolution,

but what has befallen others in former times, who have been better than we: Now that we are try'd in the Furnace of Affliction, we may have good hopes of coming forth like Gold, refined and made better; but if we faint in this Day of our Adversity, it will argue our Strength is but small.

AND first, The Example of *Job* is Illustrious, who was not more Eminent for his Riches than his Piety, which was so very remarkable, that he was the Non-such of his Age, the very Boast of Heaven: *Hast thou considered my servant Job, says the Almighty, that there is none like him, a Perfect and an Upright Man, one that feareth God, and escheweth Evil?* What Man cou'd have a fairer Character, especially considering who it was that gave it? And yet this holy *Job*, this Favourite of Heaven, was deprived in one Day, nay, in one Hour, of such an Estate, (besides his Children, which were more dear to him than all the rest) in Oxen, Camels, Sheep and Moveables, as the greatest Man in the *East* did not possess the

the like : And yet *Job* never murmur'd at his Loss, but only made this Inference from it, *Naked we came into the World, and Naked shall we go out again : The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, and blessed be the Name of the Lord.* There is at this Day an Illustrious Instance in the World, that has well near Equaliz'd *Job* in his Afflictions. God grant that he may do it in his Patience and his Piety ; and then we may all hope for the like Issue.

BUT to enumerate more Examples of the Mutability of Riches, is to hold a Candle to the Sun ; for who can walk the Streets without meeting Variety of Instances ? How many Men, who formerly liv'd plentifully, and were in good Esteem for Wealth and Riches, are now reduc'd from a *Spring-Tide* of Plenty, to the *lowest Ebb* of Poverty ? Neither has this befallen one sort of Men alone, but Men of all Ranks and Qualities, Gentlemen, Merchants, Mariners, Tradesmen, Mechanics, Citizens and Countrymen, Yeomen and Farmers : Those who were for-

merly as rich as *Cræsus*, are now as poor as *Conon* ; and from a *Dives*, turn'd into a *Lazarus* : And if you shou'd enquire by what means all this comes to pass, some wou'd inform you 'twas by *Shipwreck* at Sea, others by *Surfetship* on Land ; some by *bad Debtors* and *Politick Bankrupts*, those Pests of *Trade*, and *Shipwrecks* of the *Citizens* ; others by *Sickness*, *Physick* and *Physicians* ; and some by *grinding Usury* ; others by paying *Forfeitures* and *double Taxes*, have been brought to an irrecoverable Consumption : Some have been undone by *Careless*, *Thievish*, and *Fugitive Servants* : And even *Loyalty*, and a *Sense of our Duty to God* and the *King*, has thro' the cunning Craftiness of some Men, been made the Occasion of ruining many. But besides all these, there want not many that have been their own Ruin : Some by Good (or rather Bad) Fellowship ; others by *great House-keeping*, their *Minds* being too big for their *Means* ; some by *Hawks*, *Hounds*, *Horses*, and *Whores* ; these are destroy'd by their own
Lusts,

Lusts, and eaten by the Wolf bred in their own Flesh ; or, as 'tis fabled of *Ætæon*, are devour'd of their own Dogs. And surely those may well be call'd Uncertain Riches, that have so many Wings to fly away. I had forgot to mention *Fire*, which where it gets the Mastery, proves very fatal, and in a few hours time makes Beggars of the richest Merchants ; of which that dreadful one in *London* in the Year 1666, serves for a thousand Instances. Which shews sufficiently the Mutability of Worldly Riches, and what small Cause we have of trusting in 'em.

BUT though perhaps some Men may prove more fortunate, and that their Riches shou'd stay with 'em, as tho' they had been wedded to 'em, not to depart for Term of Life ; yet there must be a Separation when they come to dye : For as the Word of Truth, besides our own Experience, infallibly assures us, *The Rich Man when he dyes shall carry nothing away with him, his Pomp shall not descend to the Grave.* And therefore, as the Excellent St. *Augustin* has it, *Vide Viven-*

tem cogita morientem, quid hic habet, quid se cum tollit, &c. Eye the rich Man, poise and ponder his Estate, living and dying, to consider what he hath here, and what he takes with him from hence. *Damascene* hath a notable Fiction of three Friends, which all professed Love to a Man, and the Trial of it was this: One Friend would stay with him all the time of his Health and Prosperity; that Friend was Pleasure, Voluptuousness and Mirth: The Second Friend wou'd stay with him in his Sickness, yea, to the hour of Death; that Friend was Riches; but having brought him to the Grave, there it left him: The Third Friend goes with him beyond the Grave, even to God's Tribunal, and pleads for him there, and this Friend is God's Fear, and God's Favour: This Friend is more worth than all the rest; for as for the Second Friend, Riches, that leaves us, you see, at the Grave. These Friends, saith *Bernard*, either have their End before we dye, or see our End when we dye; either they forsake us, or are forsaken of us. We have already heard
what

what holy *Job* said, *Naked came we into the world, and naked shall we go out again.* And the great *Saladine*, the Conqueror of *Asia* (a second *Tamerlane*) well apply'd it to himself; for dying in his Army, instead of all other Obsequies, he ordered only a Linnen Cloth, a Winding-sheet, to be carried before him on the Top of a Spear, throughout the Camp, with this Proclamation, *Saladini quod reliquum*; Here's all that's left of Great *Saladine*. Ensigns, Trophies, Victories, Triumphs, are all included in this Linnen Rag, the Cover for my dead Corpse; and except this, all the rest must remain behind: Our Houses, Lands, Wife, Children, we must shake Hands with 'em all, and bid a long Farewel to 'em when we come to dye. *Gulielmus Parisiensis* compares those that load themselves here with thick Clay, to a Parcel of Boys that have robb'd an Orchard, who after they have eaten what they can, stuff their Pockets, Sleeves and Coats full, to carry out with them; but at the Door there stands one that searcheth them, takes all they have,
and

and sends them away with no more than they brought in. The World, says he, is the Orchard; the Cormorants of the World are those greedy Boys; the Fruit stolen, are Riches ingross'd; and the Porter is Death, who makes 'em leave it all behind 'em. It is also compared to a poor Man invited to a rich Man's Table; he has the Use of his Plate to drink in, and of his silver Spoons to eat his Broth with, while he is there at the Feast; but if he presumes to pocket up any Plate, or to carry away the least Spoon, there is search made by the Porter for what is missing, and it is taken from him with Disgrace. We are in the World as in an Inn, saith *Tully*; and we may use it as our Host's House, and our Bed too, that proper Place to which God hath called us, for the time we lodge; but we must carry away no Cloaths, no Coverings, except we borrow a Winding-sheet, useful only as the Secondine to the Child, to wrap us in; for excepting this, Death as a common Pyrate, or a Thief, strips us of all the rest.

NOW

NOW what Contentment or Satisfaction can we propose to our selves in the Enjoyment of such uncertain fluctuating Things, which either e're long will leave us, or of necessity we must leave them? It is surely a great Argument of our Minds being plac'd upon wrong Objects, when we can mourn for the loss of such flying and lying Vanities.

The Soul's Expostulation.

DISQUIET not thy self, O my Soul, about the Things of this World, nor set thine Heart on that which is not: If thou hadst not lost the World, perhaps thou might'st have lost thy self, in setting thy Heart too much upon it. And since God's Word has told thee, *That if any Man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*; thou hast cause to rejoyce that thou hast lost that, which might (hadst thou kept it) have caus'd thee to lose the Favour of GOD. And yet what hast thou lost in losing it? Or what didst thou gain by it when thou

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hadst it, except Trouble and Care? Thou hadst then no more than Food and Rayment; and that thou hast still, tho' thou hast lost thy Riches: When thou hadst most occasion for 'em, then they left thee, and fled away to Strangers. Is it not therefore far better to trust in the Living God, than in uncertain Riches? For Riches profit not in the Day of Wrath, but Righteousness delivereth from Death. And if thou mak'st it thy chief Business to seek first the Kingdom of GOD, and the Righteousness thereof, there is nothing necessary for thee, but GOD has promis'd it shall be added to thee. And wilt thou grieve, because thou art depriv'd of unnecessary Things? Learn, O my Soul, to make the Will of God the Measure of thy Desires: And when thou desirest nothing but what God wills, thou may'st desire what thou wilt, and obtain it. Thou may'st assure thy self that God wills what is best for thee; and when thou hast conform'd thy Will to his, thou needest not fear a blessed Issue. And if what God has done, appears not at the present

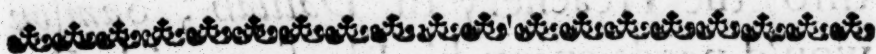
present best to thee; it is not because it really is not best, but because by reason of thy present Darkness, thou canst not see it so. God sees the End of all his Works from the Beginning, and perfectly knows the Events of all his Dispensations; but thou, O my Soul, art short-sighted, canst not see far before thee; and since thou canst not see what God intends by his present Providences, 'tis now thy time to live in the Exercise of Patience, and glorify him by believing.

A P R A Y E R.

O Most Merciful and Gracious God, who art the Well-spring of Life, and an inexhaustible Fountain of Goodness, be pleased to look in Mercy upon me poor and miserable Sinner, who had been immers'd in the Things of this Life, and drown'd in the Love of the World, hadst not thou in Mercy taken them away from me: O help me to acknowledge thy righteous Hand herein, and kiss that Rod wherewith thou hast so mercifully chastis'd me. And O most gracious

gracious God, wilt thou please for the time to come, to take off my Heart from the inordinate Love of Riches, and all other things of this World, and to place my Affections upon thy Blessed Majesty, who art my Soul's supreme and ultimate Happiness, and its exceeding great Reward. Convince me more and more of the Wickedness as well as Folly of my former Life, in forsaking Thee the Fountain of Living Waters, and hewing out to my self Cisterns, broken Cisterns that could hold no Water. Suffer me, O Lord, no longer to follow after Lying Vanities, and so to forsake my own Mercy: And let thy Love, O thou God of my Life, purge my Soul from the Love of all other Things whatsoever. Thou hast said in thy Word, That those that love Thee shall inherit Substance, whilst I, like a wretched Prodigal, have been feeding on Husks, and grasping at Shadows: O let me not henceforth trust in uncertain Riches, but in Thee the Living God; and buy of Thee Gold try'd in the Fire, that so I may be truly rich, and white Rayment, that I may be cloathed. Grant this, O Lord, and whatsoever else Thou seest necessary for me,
for

for Jesus Christ his sake. Amen. Our Father, &c.



Meditation III.

Of the Vanity of Worldly Pleasures.

PLEASURE is that which all pursue and covet, tho' most mistake the Object of it : It is that for which Men value their Lives, and without which they think it wou'd scarce be worth the Living. But if they mean the Pleasures of this World, abstracted from the Love of God, and those unspeakable Delights that are in him, there's nothing in which Men are more mistaken : So far is Worldly Pleasure from making of Men happy, that it puts 'em in a State of Death. This *St. Paul* assures us, 1 Tim. v. 6. *She that liveth in Pleasure, is dead while she liveth.* And large Experience confirms this Truth; for those that have most affected it, have always found it fatal.

LET us give a few Instances : (For we
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are apter to be led by Examples than Precepts :) The *Philistines* had taken *Samson* thro' the Treachery of *Dalilah* ; *Samson* wou'd needs enjoy his Pleasure with *Dalilah*, but she refus'd to let him, unless he told her where his Strength lay ; which when she knew, she straight betray'd him to his Enemies : And this was the Effect of *Samson's* Pleasure. When the *Philistines* had obtain'd this Prize, it made 'em mighty merry, and they must needs go take their Pleasure too : And *Samson* (whom they barbarously had blinded) must be sent for, that he might make them Sport. But it was fatal Sport to the *Philistines* ; for *Samson* having with some Assistance grop'd out the two Supporters or chief Pillars of the House, praying to God to strengthen him that he might be avenged for his two Eyes, was heard and answer'd, and *Samson* pulls the House about their Ears, whereby they all were slain, which put a bloody Period to their Pleasure.

THE *Persians* were a People given up to Pleasure above other Nations, which
made

made 'em so effeminate, as render'd 'em an easy Conquest to their Enemies. *Belsbazzar* was a Prince given to Pleasure, and liv'd in great Voluptuousness ; and that not only in a time of Peace, but when he was surrounded by his Enemies, and *Darius* lay with a vast Army on the other Side the River *Euphrates* ; this notwithstanding, *Belsbazzar* was resolv'd to take his Pleasure, and makes a great Feast to a Thousand of his Lords, and drinks Wine before 'em, even out of the sacred Vessels taken out of the Temple of the House of God which was at *Jerusalem*. But while *Belsbazzar* was taking of his Pleasure, and carousing with his Lords, there appears suddenly a *Hand writing upon the Wall*, which though the King understood not, yet *his Countenance was chang'd*, and *his Thoughts* so troubled him, that the *Joints of his Loins* were loos'd, and *his Knees* smote one against another. This quickly put an End to all their Pleasure, and fill'd 'em with Confusion and Astonishment : And the sad Epilogue to this Jovial Feast, was, That

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God

God had number'd his Kingdom, and finished it ; and that he was weigh'd in the Balances, and found wanting ; and his Kingdom was divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. And that Night Belshazzar himself was slain, which put a final End to all his Pleasure. So that it is very evident that what is affirmed of Worldly Sorrow, is much more true of Worldly Pleasure, *That it worketh Death.* And Solomon, who of all Men was best able to extract the Quintessence of Pleasure, and taste what was in it, gives us this poor, yet true Account of it, after he had made the Experiment, *Behold this also is Vanity,* Eccles. ii. 1, 2. Not only *Vain*, but *Vanity it self*, in the Abstract ; and as if this was not enough, he lays a greater Imputation on it in the next Verse, where he tells us, *I said of Laughter, It is mad ; and of Mirth, What doth it ?* And this he further exemplifies, by telling us, *It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting,* Eccl. vii. 2.

INDEED, all Pleasures, if they dye not like Children in their very Birth, yet they
they

they are liable to so many Accidents, that they quickly wither and decay, and all their Gust is gone. The Pain in one Tooth, the Cramp in one Joint, the Gout in one Toe, the Megrim in the Head, the Collick in the Guts, the Fever in the Blood, the Sciatica in the Thigh, the Fistula or Hemorrhoids in the nether Parts, or any one of these, takes away the Relish of our Pleasures, and imbitters all the Voluptuous Persons Enjoyments; turning his Singing into Sighing, his Musick into Mourning, and his Riot into Rage. And who wou'd mourn the Loss of Things so subject to a thousand Accidents, which have so little real Good in the Enjoyment?

The Soul's Expostulation.

AND now, O my Soul, consider with thy self, how vain, and how pernicious the Pleasures of the World are! For tho' Mankind do generally give up themselves to the Pursuit thereof, yet how full of Pain do they find these Pleasures!

fures! Consider, O my Soul, that sensual Pleasures are the Pleasures of Beasts ; which relish them with more Delight than Men, and use 'em according to the Dictates of Nature, and for the satisfying of their Wants ; and that with more Moderation ; for they only drink for the quenching of their Thirst, and eat for the satisfying of their Hunger : Whilst Men, endow'd with Reason, and born to a higher End, even to Glorify and Enjoy their Maker, do immerse themselves in the filthy Puddles of Drunkenness and Gluttony, and other base carnal Delights, and thereby degenerate below the Beasts that perish. Raise up thy Affections therefore, O my Soul, and place them upon Things above ; there are Pleasures and Delights that are worthy of thee, even such as are adequate to thy Wants, and capable of satisfying the Desires of an Immortal Soul. And tho' thy outward Circumstances and late Losses, have render'd thee incapable of pursuing the Pleasures of this World, thou art thereby the more fitted to aspire to those Pleasures
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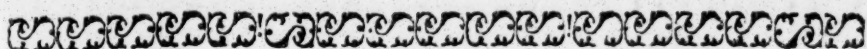
that the World can't take from thee, and which alone are worth the enjoying. If thou hearken'st to the Enchanting Syrens of Worldly Pleasure, they do but entice thee with their pleasant Songs (as they would have done *Ulysses*) till they bring thee to cast thy self into the Sea of Destruction, and overwhelm thee with eternal Ruin. But if, O my Soul, thou waitest at the Gates of Wisdom, and hearken'st to her Voice, thou soon shalt find, not only that her Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, but also that all her Paths are Peace.

A P R A Y E R.

MOST Gracious and Merciful Father, who art the God of all Consolation and Comfort, in whose Presence there is Fulness of Joy, and at whose right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore; be pleas'd to look down in Mercy upon me a wretched and miserable Sinner, who have been so long seeking that Pleasure and Satisfaction in the Creature, which is alone to be found in thy
D 3 Self;

Self; and grant that my Mind and Affections being taken off from all Carnal Delights, and fix'd upon thy Self, I may henceforth lay aside every Weight, and the Sin that doth so easily beset me, and may run with Patience the Race that thou hast set before me. And since I find in thy Word, that it is the Character of some in the last Day, That they shall be Lovers of Pleasures more than Lovers of God; make me, I humbly beseech thee, in the Number of those that have rather chose to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season: Like Moses, esteeming the Reproaches of Christ to be far more eligible than the Pleasures of Egypt. Grant this, O Lord, for Jesus Christ his Sake, thy Beloved Son, and my alone Saviour; who has further taught me to pray, saying, Our Father, &c.





Meditation IV.

Of the Nature and Causes of Afflictions.

NOtwithstanding what has been said in the three former Meditations of the Uncertainty and Emptiness of Honours, Riches, and Pleasures, and what little Cause we have to be troubled at the Loss of them ; yet since the best of Men are apt to look upon the Loss of those things as Afflictions ; and are more forward to bemoan themselves under them, than to enquire into their Causes ; and since the finding out of their Causes, is the best way to remove their Effects, I will now enquire into the Nature and Causes of Afflictions, and therein what were the Sins that procur'd those Calamities under which our Royal Master and his Family has so long suffer'd.

AFFLICTIONS are always Evils in themselves, and in their own Nature ; tho' through the over-ruling Providence

of Almighty God, they are often turn'd to the great Advantage of those that suffer 'em. So the Author to the *Hebrews* tells us, *No chastening for the present is joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby*, Heb. xii. 11. And this was the Experience of the Royal Prophet, *Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now, says he, have I kept thy Word.* And in another place he tells us, *It is good for me, that I have been afflicted.* And yet these Afflictions were grievous to him to bear, for he cries out, *They made him go mourning all the day long.* But these Sufferings are never brought upon a People, or a Family, without a Cause; for God does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of Men; and St. Peter tells us expressly, that it is not without need be, that we are in heaviness---- And it is as sure that Sin is always the Cause of suffering. And therefore the Psalmist says, *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume as the moth.*

moth. And the Prophet *Jeremiah* asks, *Wherefore does a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?* So that nothing can be more clear, than that Sin is the Cause of Affliction. Which being laid down as an undoubted Truth, it remains that we enquire what those Sins are, which are most likely to bring down National Judgments; and then to examine whether we have not been guilty of those Sins; that so we may thereby come to know wherefore it is that God contendeth with us; and knowing that, that we may repent of our Iniquities, and return unto him against whom we have sinned, that he may return unto us with Mercy and with Loving-kindness.

1. THE Sin of prophane Swearing and Cursing, is that which brings God's Judgments on a Nation. Hence the Prophet tells us, that *because of Swearing the land mourns*: And this Sin is expressly forbidden by the Third Commandment, which enjoins us *not to take the Name of the Lord our God in vain*; and threatens, that *God will not hold him guiltless that does*

does so. Whereby is implied, That GOD will charge the Guilt and Violation of his holy Law upon such a one; the taking his Name in vain being a prophaning of it: Whereas we are commanded to fear that great and dreadful Name, The LORD our GOD. And this prophane Swearing is also forbidden in the New Testament, our Blessed Saviour strictly enjoining us *not to swear at all*, Mat. v. 34. And this St. James presses farther, saying, *Above all things, my brethren, swear not*, Jam. v. 12. Not that hereby we are forbidden to testify the Truth of a Matter upon Oath before a Magistrate, as some dream; for in this case St. Paul tells us, That *an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife*, Heb. vi. 16. The Intent therefore is, That we abstain from all prophane Swearing, which is a taking of God's Name in vain, and a procuring Cause of his Judgments upon a People and Nation; of which there wants not Plenty of Examples, both Sacred and Prophane, were it needful to insert 'em.

BUT that which more concerns us, is,
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To enquire whether we are not grievously guilty hereof our selves, and so are justly made an Example to others? And in this case, I must say, our Guilt is too evident to be deny'd; for we declare our Sin as *Sodom*, and hide it not: Our Tongues being oftner us'd in imprecating Divine Vengeance, even Damnation it self, upon our Souls, than in imploring the Pardon of our Sins. How many are there that pretend Love and Loyalty to our King, yet will shew it no other way, but by drinking his Health, till they have lost their own; and by their horrid execrable Oaths, defying of the Majesty of Heaven? Alas! What can be expected from those Men, that are every hour bidding Defiance to the Almighty, and daring God to damn them? With what face can they pretend to love their King, that thus affront their Maker? Who ever thus harden'd himself against God and prosper'd? It was these Fighters against Heaven, that brought the Royal Martyr to the Block; and were more guilty of his Death, than the Regicides that condemn'd

demn'd him, or the villanous Executioner that sever'd his Royal Head from his Sacred body. And it is such as these that have turn'd our Royal Master out of his Throne, and forc'd him to Abdicate (as some will have it) his Crown and Kingdoms. For when GOD was thus engag'd against him, by the reiterated Blaspheinous Imprecations of his pretended Followers, how cou'd he hope to stand? For shame, therefore, Gentlemen, let us either lay aside our Pretences of Loyalty to the King, or cease to offend GOD as we do every Day, by belching forth such Vollies of loud Oaths and Blasphemies against him. For had we but as frequently employ'd our Tongues in praying for him, as we have done in cursing of our selves, and in blaspheming God, we might have long since hop'd a better Issue. If therefore we wou'd shew our selves good Subjects to the King, let us approve our Hearts to God as good Christians, which we cannot do but by walking in his Ways, and keeping of his Laws. We have seen the fatal Effects of

Cursing

Cursing and Swearing, let us now steer a contrary Course, and betake our selves to Prayers and Tears, the Churches only Weapons in suffering Times. Of which I shall say more at the Conclusion. - - - But,

2. Whoredom and Adultery is another crying Sin that brings down God's Judgments upon a Nation. This Sin is directly against the Seventh Commandment, which *forbids us to commit Adultery*; and however the Fools of this Age, I mean such as *make a Mock at Sin*, have stil'd it but a *Trick of Youth*, and that the *Roman Church* calls it but a *Venial Sin*; yet we have a more sure Word of Prophecy, even the holy Scriptures, which tells us, *That for these things the wrath of God comes upon the children of disobedience.* And well it may, since the Author to the *Hebrews* assures, That (how slight soever others make of it, yet) *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge.* And that this Sin brings down Judgments on a Nation, the Prophet *Jeremiah* informs us, *Jer. v. 7, 8, 9. - - - When I had fed them to the full,*

full, then they committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots houses: They were as fed horses in the morning; every one neighed after his neighbour's wife. This was their Sin; and what the Effect of it was, the next Verse shews us; Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? And shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? This sufficiently expresses God's Anger against it, especially when it is grown common.

IT now concerns us therefore to examine our selves, and see whether this also be not registred in that black Catalogue of Sins which we are guilty of! And I am much afraid that there is but few of us that can say in this respect, my Heart is clean: For the Footsteps of this Sin are but too plainly to be trac'd among us. And therefore all of us have reason to humble our Souls before God, and to say, *O Lord, to us belongs confusion of face, to our Kings, to our Princes, and to our Nobles, (as well as to the Commons) because we have sinned against thee.* For my part, I know not what unaccountable

table Liberty some Men give themselves in this Matter ; as if those in high Places had a Toleration, or a License to sin : But I am sure God's Word allows none ; no, not to the greatest of Men. The Law of God is, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery* ; and I know of no Exception. Of this Sin, when King *David* himself was found guilty, though he had an illustrious Pardon sent him from Heaven, *Thou shalt not dye* ; yet it did not exempt him from Temporal Judgments, for the Prophet *Nathan* told him plainly, *The sword shou'd never depart from his house, because he had despised God, in taking the wife of Uriah* -- Therefore let all that are concerned herein (how great soever they be) humble their Souls under the mighty Hand of God, and turn from the Evil of their Doings, that God may be thereby reconciled unto us, and have Mercy upon us. For this is a Sin that if not repented of, will keep good things from us, and make a Separation between us and our God. And such have the more reason to do this, because their Ex-
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ample may have corrupted many ; for, *Regis ad Exemplum totus componitur Orbis.* And indeed this Sin has spread so exceedingly upon that account, that I am persuaded it has been none of the least Causes of God's heavy Displeasure against us. Yet will not this in the least justify them, of a lower degree, who shall follow so ill an Example ; for by them God's holy Law is violated, and himself provoked by their Filthiness, and themselves thereby made the Cause of bringing down the Judgments of God both upon King and People ; such have therefore great Reason forthwith to break off their Sins by Righteousness, and turn from the Evil of their Ways ; that the Lord may pardon their Sins, and heal our Land.

3. *Cruelty and Bloodshed* is a great and crying Sin, which defiles the Land, and brings down Judgments from Heaven upon it : Nay, it causes the Divine Majesty to shut out our very Prayers, so that he will not hear us. The Prophet *Isaiab* gives us a full Account of this, in the first Chapter of his Prophecy, in the 7th Verse

he gives an Account of God's Judgments on the *Israelites*, not altogether unlike what has befallen us; for, says he, *Your country is desolate, your cities are burnt with fire; your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.* And in the 15th Verse, GOD tells them, *When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; and when you make many prayers, I will not hear.* Would you know now what it is that has provok'd the Almighty against them? He assigns this as the Reason of all, in the latter End of the 15th Verse, *Your hands are full of blood.* This is also farther evident from the Example of King *Saul*, who was a bloody Man, not only in commanding the Priests of the Lord, even Fourscore and five Persons that wore a linnen Ephod, to be slain; but also because he sought to slay the *Gibeonites*, under a pretence of Zeal to the Children of *Israel* and *Judah*, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 2. But these things brought down publick Judgments upon the Land several Years after; for when in the Reign

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of *David* there was a Famine in the Land for three Years, and *David* enquired of the Lord to know the Cause thereof, he was answered, *It is for Saul, and for his bloody house* ; and nothing cou'd appease God's Anger, till seven of *Saul's* Sons were hang'd on that account : So loud is the Cry of innocent Blood against the Shedders thereof.

LET us now enquire, how far we are concern'd in the Guilt of this Sin also : And shou'd we go about to clear our selves herein, the very Gates of the great City of the Kingdom wou'd cry out against us ; and all the *West* of *England* would testify the contrary to us. I am well assured, that our Royal Master is not a Prince that does delight in Blood, and I wish with all my heart, that I could say as much for all his Servants. But alas ! How many are there, that under a pretence of Zeal for the King's Service, have executed their own private Revenge, and thereby exceedingly disserv'd the King, on whom the *Odium* always lay. We all know there was a Rebellion in the *West* of

of *England*, and there is no question but Justice requir'd some Examples shou'd be made: But had the King's Ministers (to whom he entirely left it) made as much use of Mercy as they did of Justice, I am sure they wou'd have done the King more Service; and I have reason to be of this Opinion, since *Solomon* tells us, (who had also a Rebellion broke forth at the Beginning of his Reign, against him) That *the King's Throne is establisht by Mercy*. But I will say no more of that, because those who were the chief Instruments therein, have long since given an Account of their Actions before a higher Tribunal, where they have receiv'd the just Recompence of their Reward. And if there be any of us yet alive that have been concern'd in shedding of innocent Blood, or that have pursu'd our own Revenge under a Shew either of Loyalty or Justice, they have great Reason to acknowledge their Sin, and to humble their Souls before God, and take shame to themselves, as having, to the utmost of their Power, therein brought down the Judgments of

God both upon our King and on his People. As to my self, I can appeal to the Searcher of Hearts, that I was grieved to see that Effusion of Christian Blood, and wou'd have prevented it, had it lain in my Power ; and as I had an Opportunity, I shew'd Mercy ; and where I cou'd not, I have not been wanting to pray, that the Guilt of that Blood might not fall upon the King, nor on his Royal Issue. For even then my fore-boding Soul had great Apprehensions that it wou'd cry loud for Vengeance.

BUT in the Fourth place, *Oppression* and *Injustice* is another crying Sin that brings down Judgments on a Nation. To this the Word of GOD abundantly bears Witness. Hence it is that God so often complains, That *they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them ; but every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards ; and that he looked for judgment, but behold oppression ; for righteousness, but behold a cry.* And therefore the Prophet *Isaiah* exhorts them, if they expect Mercy, to
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seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, and plead the cause of the widow; threatening that if they refus'd, they shou'd be devour'd with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. And in another place the Prophet complains, *That judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter:* And for this God threatens that *the whole land shall be desolate; and that the earth shall mourn, and the heavens above shall be black.* These things sufficiently declare the dreadful Consequences and Effects of Injustice and Oppression; and that it brings down National Judgments.

LET us now enquire, how far we are concern'd in the Guilt of this Sin. And I am afraid that neither in this shall we be able to acquit our selves; for tho' I wou'd not be thought to charge my Royal Master in this matter, yet I am very sure that those through whose Hands the Administration of Affairs then pass'd, made so many false Steps, that they can by no

means be acquitted of Injustice, as well as great Imprudence: And this I am the bolder to say, because it was for their Mismanagement, that the King now suffers. And that this may the better appear, I will descend to a few Particulars.

TO say nothing of turning the *West* into a Slaughter-house, and making such Shambles of the Roads and Highways there; exercising this Cruelty upon many that the whole Country knew were altogether innocent of that for which they suffer'd, which was the ready way to bring an *Odium* upon the King, by making the People believe that he was as Inexorable as his Ministers: I say, to pass by this, having before said something of it, it was undoubtedly a great Piece of Injustice to set up a New Court for the Management of Ecclesiastical Affairs, contrary to the express Laws of the Land; whereby the Church and Clergy of *England* were subjected to the Wills of some Men that were Enemies to both; who made the King's Authority a Stalking-horse to their own private Malice and Revenge, and thereby
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put many Fears into the Hearts of those that were the King's best Friends, who cou'd not but foresee the fatal Tendency of such Proceedings.

IT was likewise a great Piece of Injustice to suspend the Right Reverend the Bishop of *London* from the Exercise of his Pastoral Charge, for that which in it self was no Offence; the said Bishop having acted (at least in that Affair) with all that Caution and Prudence which the Duty of his Place requir'd. Which besides the Injustice and Oppression of it, was a great Disservice to the King, in disquieting the Minds of his good Subjects, who began to grow doubtful whereto such things might tend; and many of 'em (as the Event too sadly shew'd) began to entertain such Thoughts of his Majesty, as was inconsistent with their Duty; and might have forewarn'd the Authors of those irregular Actings, that that which was their Sin, wou'd quickly be their Punishment.

THE Declaration for Liberty of Conscience, (tho' it might indeed shew the King's Lenity to Dissenters) was certainly a false Step in the Advisers, both as it

put too great a Power into the Dissenters Hands, who had been lately so severely prosecuted ; as also because it was expressly against Law : For tho' the Dissenters might have been conniv'd at in their different Way of Worship (which wou'd have satisfy'd them, and have been serviceable to the Government, in making them easy, and so keeping them quiet ; yet to make 'em capable of holding Offices in Corporations, and setting 'em upon an equal Foot with the Church of *England* (or rather above it) was too bold a Stroke at once ; and made the People too much inclin'd to think it was design'd to serve another Interest, rather than that of Protestant Dissenters. And tho' in this I am verily persuaded of the King's Sincerity and Uprightness, I cannot be so of some that were very near him, and to whom he cou'd scarce deny any thing.

THERE was also another false Step in the putting out of this Declaration, and which was a great Piece both of Injustice and Oppression, and that was, the

the enjoinning it to be sent to the Bishops of every *See*, to be by them ordered to be read by their respective Ministers in each *Diocese*. Why should the Bishops be deny'd Liberty of Conscience, when it was granted to Dissenters? And why could not the Dissenters enjoy the Liberty of their Consciences without the Bishops being enjoyn'd to read the Declaration, which they knew to be contrary to the Law, and therefore illegal? Not that the Bishops were against Indulgence to Dissenters, when it should be propos'd in Parliament, but they then saw there was *latet in Anguis*, a Snake in the Grass, which many were not aware of. And that the Bishops shou'd be imprison'd in the *Tower*, for refusing to do that which was against their Consciences, was certainly a very false Step in the Advisers, besides a great piece of Injustice: And I am very sorry that the fatal Consequence thereof was no more perceiv'd by the King and his Ministers. I have however, this Consolation in my self, That what I acted at that time, was
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out of Duty both to God and the King ; and that I am no way to be charg'd with what afterwards follow'd thereupon ; and if I was at all mistaken, or acted beyond what I ought to have done, I humbly beg Pardon both of God and the King ; being well assur'd in my own Integrity, and that it was without any evil Design. I did indeed soon perceive of what ill Consequence it would be to his Majesty, and what Improvement his Enemies wou'd make of it ; but it was not in my Power to help it.

THE violent Proceedings against the President and Fellows of *Magdalen-College* in *Oxford*, was also very unjust and oppressive, and a very false Step, both in the Advisers and Actors : And what I cannot remember, when I consider what Effect it had upon the People, without great Compassion to his Majesty ; who by the violent Passions of some hot and fiery Spirits was precipitated into such fatal Counsels ; where all the Profit would redound to others, but all the *Odium* rest upon the King. As to the Fellows, I must
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own they did but their Duty, and they could not chuse otherways than according to the Statutes of the College. And indeed to compel them to do it, was both against Law, and against the King's Declaration for Liberty of Conscience, which surely extended to them as well as to others, they having the same Plea.

IT is not without Cause that I have so largely insisted on these several Instances of Injustice and Oppression: For these things carry'd the evident Tokens of Divine Displeasure along with 'em, and were afterwards made the chief Motives for introducing the late Revolution: Which tho' it was too wide a Stretch, and very unreasonably urg'd so far, (for a Chimney that smoaks may be mended, without any Danger of the House being pull'd down) yet was it such a Rebuke to the Authors of those precipitate Counsels, that (as I said before) they might easily see their Sin in their Punishment; nor should I have at all mourn'd their Fate, had they not involv'd my Royal Master in the same Ruin with them.

UPON

UPON a serious Reflection on the fore-mentioned Sins, and our own guilt therein, we may plainly discern that it is not without very great Cause, that it has pleas'd God to bring these Afflictions upon us : And that we have reason to join in that Confession of the Church in the Lamentations, *The Lord is righteous, for we have rebelled against his commandments : Thou hast made us as the off-scouring and refuse in the midst of the People : For we have transgressed and rebelled, and thou hast not pardoned ; but hast covered us with anger, and persecuted us ; yea, thou hast covered thy self with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through. The Lord hath accomplished his fury, he hath poured upon us his fierce anger, for the sins of her prophets, and the iniquity of her priests.*

WHAT then remains, but that knowing the Cause of our Afflictions, we endeavour to remove them, by humbling our selves under the mighty Hand of God, and by searching and trying our Ways, and turning again to the Lord : For *the Lord will not cast off for ever, but if we repent*

repent of our Sins, and turn unfeignedly to him, *tho' he cause grief, yet he will have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies; for he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men; to turn aside the right of a man before the face of the most High, to subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not.* Let us therefore in good Earnest set about this Work of Repentance and Reformation; for were we once but a Reformed People, we should soon be a happy People: Our Losses would soon be made up, and *strangers should no more rule over us.* But whilst we are going on in our old Sins, we must still expect that GOD will follow us with his Judgments until we be consumed. *For if we do wickedly, we shall be destroyed, both we and our King.*

NEITHER let our Hearts fret against the Lord, but submit to his Will; for 'tis he that hath done it, and 'tis our Duty to be patient under it, and wait his Time for our Deliverance: To go about to deliver our selves, is but to make our Bonds the stronger, and to entangle our
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selves more : *Our strength is to sit still, and to wait for the Salvation of God : For when he works, there's none can let it ; and till he does arise and work, all we can do will be in vain. And this many have found to their Cost. Let us learn to be Wise, by other Mens Harms. There are many devices in the heart of man, but the counsel of the Lord that shall stand : And whoever goes about to resist it, will find himself sadly deceived. I will always maintain my Loyalty to the King, and quietly submit to the Power that protects me. That so I may keep a conscience void of offence both towards God and towards man. And it is the Grief of my Heart to see any otherwise minded : For if we must not speak wickedly for God, nor talk deceitfully for him, much less must we act wickedly for him. And yet I would be found doing too ; I mean, I would be found in the daily Exercise of Faith and Repentance, and endeavour to get a broken and contrite Heart for my past Sins ; because God has assur'd me, that with such sacrifices he is well pleased.*

The Soul's Expostulation.

AND now, O my Soul, consider with thy self, if Sin be the procuring Cause of all thy Troubles, hast thou not greater Reason to be troubled for thy Sins, than for thy Sufferings? Afflictions may make thee better, but Sin always makes thee worse. It may be necessary sometimes to chuse Sorrow, but it never can be so to chuse Sin. 'Tis God alone is that Wise Alchymist that can extract Good from Evil; and make even the Sins of his People turn to his Glory: Thus through the working of God's Grace, thy Pride may tend to humble thee, and a due sense of thy Passion may produce Patience. But this is alone the Effect of God's Grace, for the Nature of Sin is only Evil. What reason then, O my Soul, hast thou to blefs God, who has made thy Outward Losses prove thy Inward Gain; by taking thee off from the Pursuit of Sin, and training thee up in the School of Affliction! Sure, O my Soul, it concerns thee

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to see what good Lessons thou hast learn'd there ; for if thou art not the better for't, thou wilt certainly be the worse : Affliction is a Furnace, and if thou comest not forth purified like Gold, thy dross will appear the more. But if thou canst say with *David*, *It has been good for me that I have been afflicted*, thou hast great cause to bless God for it. If these Trials have done thee good, what hast thou to complain of ? And if by the Light of Affliction thou hast seen the greatness of thy Sin, and that sight of Sin has humbled thee, and brought thee to Repentance, thou art hereby become a greater Gainer, than all the outward Prosperity in the World could make thee : For there is no Comparison between Temporal Losses, and Spiritual Gains : For *all the things that are seen, are but temporal ; but the things that are not seen, are eternal* : How blessed a thing is it, O my Soul, to be afflicted ! Seeing *these light afflictions that are but for a moment, work out for thee a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory* : This, O my Soul, is enough not
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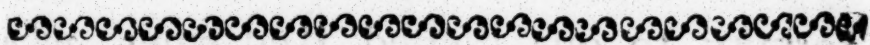
only to make them rejoyce, but even glory in Tribulations, since they have so blessed an Effect. - See then, O my Soul, that thy *Tribulation worketh Patience, and Patience Experience, and Experience Hope, even that Hope which maketh not ashamed;* and so shalt thou have rejoicing in thy self, and not in another.

A P R A Y E R.

O *Almighty and merciful Lord God, who madest all things for thy own Glory, and canst over-rule all Events so, as to bring Glory to thy Name, and Good to thy People, out of the darkest of thy Dispensations towards them; Grant, I beseech thee, that these Afflictions with which thou hast been pleased to exercise me, may by thy gracious Ordination bring forth the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness unto me; that I may be enabled to say, It is good for me that I have been afflicted. And suffer me not, O Lord, either to despise thy chastening, by going on in those Ways of Sin and Rebellion against thee, which have brought thy Judg-*
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ments down upon this Nation ; nor to defer my Repentance for those Iniquities which I have been guilty of : And since thou hast declared in thy Word, That he which hideth his Sins shall not prosper, but that those who confess 'em and forsake 'em shall find Mercy ; Help me, I humbly beseech thee, with all thy People, to make our Confession unto thee, and to acknowledge that we have sinned, and have committed Iniquity, and have rebelled, by departing from thy Precepts and thy Judgments ; neither have we hearken'd to thy Servants, the Ministers, which spoke in thy Name to our Kings, our Princes, and our Fathers, and to all the People of the Land : And therefore, O Lord, Righteousness belongs unto thee, but unto us Confusion of Face, as at this Day, to our King, our Princes, and our Judges, because we have sinned against thee : And have added this Evil unto all the rest, that yet we have not made our Prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our Iniquities, and understand thy Truth. O Lord our God, we pray thee hear, incline thine Ear, and open thine Eyes, and behold our
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low Estate : For we do not present these our Supplications before thee for our Righteousness sake, but for thy great Mercies, thro' Jesus Christ, our Lord and only Saviour. Our Father, &c.



Meditation V.

Of the Benefit and Advantage of Afflictions.

WE have in the former Meditation enquir'd into the Nature of Afflictions, they are Evils in themselves, not joyous but grievous ; and into the Causes of them, which generally is Sin ; and what some of those Sins are, we have also examin'd, and found our selves to be concern'd in them ; which calls for our hearty Sorrow and Repentance. But as a wise Physician will so temper Poison, as not only to allay its Venom, but turn it into an Antidote ; so does the great Physician of our Souls do with Afflictions ; making them work together for our Good, and bring forth for us the

peaceable Fruits of Righteousness. And here I will a little meditate upon the Reasons why it pleases God to afflict his Children, and what the Benefits are that we reap thereby.

1. Because we might shew our Conformity to our Blessed Redeemer, *who first suffered, and then entred into his Glory*: In like manner we are told, that *if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him*: And the greater Tryals we endure here, the brighter will our Crown of Glory shine hereafter. The Author to the *Hebrews*, having given a large Account of the Sufferings of the People of God in former Ages, and of their not accepting Deliverance, gives this as the Reason, that *they expected a better Resurrection*. Agreeable to which, our Lord tells us, That *those that are persecuted here for Righteousness sake, are blessed, because theirs is the kingdom of heaven*: And seeing the captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings, why should it not also be the same with his Followers?

2. Another Reason why it pleases God

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to exercise us here with Afflictions, is, That our Hearts might be drawn off from the Love of the World, which is an Enemy to God. The inordinate Love of the World, makes the Soul incapable of the Love of God; for St. *John* tells us expressly, *That if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* How much better is it then to have the Hatred of the World, and to have God our Friend, than to have the World our Friend, and God our Enemy? And sure we have no reason to complain of Afflictions, since St. *Paul* tells us, *We are chastened of the Lord, that we might not be condemned with the World.* God is pleased to imbitter the World to us by Afflictions, as a tender Mother does her Teat, when she wou'd wean her Child from the Breast; she rubs her Nipple with Aloes or Wormwood, which the Child tasting, will take the Breast no more: So when the World wou'd intice us to the Love thereof, by its Delights and Pleasures, our merciful Father sends us Tribulations and Afflictions to take our Hearts

from the Love of present things ; which could we have quietly enjoy'd, we should have been for building Tabernacles here. Could the Prodigal Son have fill'd his Belly with Husks, he would never have thought of returning to his Father ; but Want and Affliction brought him from the Swine, with whom he would have staid, could he have got his Belly full.

3. Another Benefit we receive by Affliction is, That we are thereby cured of our Soul-Diseases ; and that too, of such as are otherwise almost incurable. Honours, Riches, and a prosperous Condition in the World, cause us too often to contract those sinful Habits which we never come to reflect upon, much less to repent of, until Affliction makes us : Therefore it is that *Solomon* tells us, *The rod and reproof give wisdom.* The Story of *Joseph's* Brethren is remarkable ; they had sold their Brother to the *Ishmaelitic* Merchants, and made their Father believe he was torn in pieces of wild Beasts, and then thought all was well ; and were not at all troubled that they had

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fold their Brother, and deceiv'd their Father: But afterwards when they went down to *Egypt*, and were there put in Ward, and charged as being Spies, this Affliction brings to their remembrance their former Usage of their Brother *Joseph*, and now they cry out, *We are verily guilty concerning our brother : We saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear ; therefore is this distress come upon us.* Had it not been for that Affliction, in all probability they had never repented of their Cruelty to *Joseph*. One likeneth Afflictions to the Rod of *Moses* ; for as the striking that upon the Rock brought forth Water, so the Rod of Affliction often mollifieth stony-hearted Sinners, and makes the Waters of Repentance to gush out. Another compares it to a File, for as that cleanses the Iron from its Rust, and makes it bright ; so Affliction files off that Rust of Sin, which worldly Prosperity has contracted, and makes our Graces shine more bright and glorious. The Scripture likewise compares it to a Furnace wherein Gold is

tried, and purged from all its Filth and Dross, and brought to the greatest degree of Perfection. It may also well be compared to a Purging Potion ; for as that driveth the corrupt and ill Humours out of a diseased Body, so Afflictions drive evil Passions and corrupt Desires and Affections out of the Soul ; such as Pride, Vain-glory, Sloth, Niceness, Lust, Gluttony, Drunkenness, and many more. And *Elihu* speaking to *Job* of the Afflictions with which God uses to exercise his People, tells him, *It is that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from him.* He does indeed, says *Elihu*, *chasten him with pains upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain ; so that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat ; yea, his soul draweth near to the grave, and his life to the destroyers : Lo these things, says he, worketh God oftentimes with man.* But wou'd you know to what End ? 'Tis to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.

4. Another Benefit of Affliction is,
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That it is a Preservative from Evil, and keeps us from many Sins which we should otherwise run into : This is what God intends, by the Prophet *Hosea*, when he tells the Children of *Judah*, that were bent upon Idolatry, and resolved to go after their Lovers, that God wou'd prevent 'em, and put a Stop in their Way ; *I'll hedge up thy way with Thorns*, says God : That is, I will bring such Afflictions upon you, as shall be as so many Thorns in your Sides, which shall put a stop to your Career in Wickedness. And this was the Experience of Holy *David* long before : For he tells us, *Psal. cxix. 71. It is good for me that I have been afflicted* : If you ask why it was good for him, or what Benefit he found by it ? He readily tells you, *Vers. 67. Before I was afflicted, I went astray ; but now have I kept thy word* : And therefore instead of murmuring against God for Afflictions, he justifies God ; *I know, O Lord*, says he, *that thy judgments are just, and that in faithfulness thou hast afflicted me.*

5, ANOTHER Advantage we reap
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by Afflictions, is, That hereby God puts us upon the Trial of our Graces : There are many that will Swim with the Tide, that won't venture when the Stream is against 'em. What the Devil falsely said of *Job*, is but too true of many Men, *they won't serve God for nought !* When God blesses them with the good things of this Life, and they have all that their Hearts can wish, then they will be for God, and for the Profession of Religion ; but if he puts forth his Hand, and takes away what they have, they will be like those that the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks of, who when they are hungry, and hardly bestead, shall fret themselves, and curse their King and their God. And therefore *Job's* Constancy under those great Afflictions, made his Piety and Patience so much the more Illustrious. 'Tis Affliction that shews us which are Hypocrites, and which are sincere Christians ; a sincere Christian varies not with the Times, but is *semper idem*, always the same ; whereas a Hypocrite is a Time-server, and will turn with the Times, rather than be turn'd out : If Tribulation comes,

comes, he is for avoiding of it, let it come from what Quarter it will. How many can we remember that made the greatest Pretences of Loyalty to the King, that cou'd be ; and had there been no occasion to try their Loyalty, would have been loyal still ; but when Times of Affliction and Trial came on, and the King was forc'd to withdraw himself, they likewise withdrew their Loyalty. This shews that times of Afflictions are times of Trial ; by which God proves the Truth of our Love to him, and our Zeal for him : And by which we also may come to know the Deceitfulness of our own Hearts ; which is also the Design of God in our Afflictions, as the Holy Ghost testifies, 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. where speaking of Hezekiah, we have these Words, *Howbeit, in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him, to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he (i. e. Hezekiah) might know all that was in his heart.*

6. ANOTHER Benefit that we receive by Afflictions is, That they make us run

to

to God : Fulness and Prosperity oft makes us forget God, and run away from him, but Afflictions generally drive us to him ; and indeed is the only way to reclaim us. This the Prophet *Hosea* tells us, where God speaking of his People that had gone away from him, and follow'd Idols, threatens to bring Afflictions upon 'em ; *I will be as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah ; I will tear and go away ; I will take away, and none shall rescue.* Would you know God's Design herein ? *I will go, says he, and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offences, and seek my Face :* But when will that be ? O, says God, *In their affliction they will seek me early.* When we are walking abroad in the Fields, and the Weather is good, we are not solicitous about a Place of shelter ; but if a Storm arises, and a Shower comes, then we look out for a Shelter, and make haste unto it : God is call'd in the Scripture, *A covert from the storm and from the rain,* Isa. iv. 6. And therefore when the Tempest of God's Wrath arises, and the Storm of his Anger is pour'd
upon

upon the World, whither shall we run for safety, but to Him who is a Covert from the Storm and from the Rain? At such times especially we run to God, as to our great *Asylum* and Refuge; knowing that under the Shadow of his Wings we shall be safe. Thus it was in the Wilderness with the *Israelites*; a stiff-necked Generation, continually provoking God by their unbelief; and this they did to that degree, that God often sent his Judgments amongst them, by which many of them were destroyed; and these Afflictions made them seek after and run to God; for so the Psalmist tells, *Psal. lxxviii. 34. When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned, and enquired early after God.* And tho' the Psalmist tells us, that *they did but flatter him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongue, and that their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant;* yet this running of theirs to him in the time of their Affliction, did so far prevail with God, that *he being full of compassion destroyed them not; but turned his anger away,*

away, and did not stir up all his wrath. And David himself frequently professes that God was his Refuge in time of Trouble, whereto he did continually resort. So that this is certainly a great Advantage that we gain by Afflictions, that they drive us to God, to whom we fly for Refuge, and where we find Security.

7. There is also this Advantage in Afflictions, That by means of them we come to live in the daily Exercise of all Virtues ; which without Afflictions we could not do : This St. Paul affirms, *Rom. v. 3. We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience ; and patience, experience ; and experience, hope ; and hope maketh not ashamed :* This is the natural Consequence of Afflictions ; for then we live in the Exercise of Faith, by believing Gods Promise, that all things shall work together for our Good ; and relying upon him for our Deliverance : We live in the Exercise of Hope, by an assured Expectation of the Reward promised to them that suffer : And in the Exercise of Charity, by having our Hearts inflam'd

inflam'd with the Love of Christ, who gave himself for us, whereby we are made willing to offer up our selves a Free-will-Offering to him, both in Life and Death : Our Patience is exercis'd in suffering the Will of God, with Quietness and Resignation of Soul ; and our Humility, by abasing our selves in the sight of God, and being willing to suffer shame for his sake.

8. ANOTHER Advantage that we reap by Afflictions (which is the last I shall mention, because I affect brevity) is, That when they have brought forth in us the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness, our Mouths (and our Hearts too) shall be filled with Songs of Deliverance : Thus *David* rejoyc'd in God, *Psal. LIX.*
16. I will sing of thy power, yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning ; for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble : The Children of Israel had been kept a long time in the House of Bondage, in the Land of Egypt, where they were made to serve with Rigor : But with what Songs of Praise were their
Mouths

Mouths filled, upon their Deliverance!
 How did they exult in the Lord, and
 glory in the God of their Salvation!
 There had been no occasion for those
 Songs of Deliverance, had they not been
 kept in Bondage! Nor had they seen the
 Power of God so wonderfully display'd
 on their behalf, which made them cry out,
*Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the
 gods! Who is like unto thee! Glorious in
 Holiness, Fearful in Praises, doing Wonders!*
 Had King David come to the Crown,
 without meeting with those Troubles that
 preceded it, he had not been so sensibly
 affected with God's Mercy in delivering
 him, as he was, nor in all Probability,
 had writ that excellent Song of Praise
 recited both in 2 Sam. xxii. and in Psal.
 xviii. Intituled, *A Psalm of David the
 servant of the L O R D, who spake unto
 the L O R D the words of this song, in the
 day that the L O R D deliver'd him from
 the hand of all his enemies, and from the
 hand of Saul.* In which he first gives an
 account of his great Distresses; for, says
 he, *The sorrows of death compassed me,*
and

and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid ; nay, he goes farther than this, and tells us, *The sorrows of hell compassed him about, and the snares of death prevented him :* And then exults in GOD for his great Deliverance ; *The Lord was my stay: By Thee have I run through a Troop ; by my GOD have I leaped over a Wall: As for GOD, his way is perfect: The Word of the LORD is tried : He is a Buckler to all those that trust in Him: For who is GOD save the LORD ? Or who is a Rock save our GOD ? The LORD liveth, and blessed be my Rock, and let the GOD of my Salvation be exalted: It is GOD that avengeth me, and subdueth the people under me--- He delivereth me from mine enemies : Yea, Thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me : Thou hast delivered me from the violent man : Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy Name. Great Deliverance giveth he to his King, and sheweth mercy to his Anointed, to David and to his Seed, for evermore. Thus David's being delivered out of his Troubles,*

fill'd his Mouth with Songs of Deliverance to his great Deliverer. [GOD is the same GOD still, and has the same Power to save, and the same Bowels of Compassion to shew Mercy. Let us therefore lift up our Eyes and our Hearts to Him. We have been long looking to Men; but they have prov'd but as broken Reeds, that have rather pierc'd our Hands, than holpen us: We have experienc'd the Truth of what *David* long ago affirmed, *That men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye*: And therefore let us all say as he does, *Psal. lxii. 5. My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.*]--- But to proceed: It is (as I have said before) none of the least Benefit of Afflictions, that it makes Deliverance more sweet to us: For, as after a great Drought, a Shower of Rain is more refreshing to the Earth; or when we are extreme thirsty, a Draught of Drink is sweeter to us; and a Calm is render'd more pleasant and acceptable to Passengers, after a troublesome Tempest; so will our Deliverance be more grateful
to

to us, after we have been exercis'd with great and fore Afflictions. Thus in the lxxviiith Psalm, and the 13th Verse, *Tho' ye have lien among the pots, (like Sons of Clay, esteem'd as the Filth of the World, and the Off-scouring of all thing) yet (when your Deliverance shall come) ye shall be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold: i. e. Ye shall be so much the more bright and glorious; and for every Sorrow you underwent in the Time of your Affliction, you shall receive redoubled Consolations after your Deliverance. And this Deliverance will come in due time, if with Faith and Patience we be found waiting for it: For tho' heaviness may endure for a night, yet joy will come in the morning; especially if we let Patience have its perfect Work: But if thro' Impatience we seek to hasten it, we shall but retard it; for he that believeth, maketh not haste. - - - And that we may the more quietly submit to the good Pleasure of GOD, and rest satisfied in his wise Disposal of Things, our next Me-*

dition shall be of our Resignation to the Will of GOD.

The Soul's Expostulation.

LET us now, O my Soul, a little Contemplate on the adorable Wisdom of GOD, who is wonderful in Counsel, and excellent in working; whose way is in the Sea, and his Path in the great Waters, and his footsteps are not known: Since then, O my Soul, his Judgments are such a great deep, that all the Lines of a created Understanding can never fathom them, Is it not much better to accept of his Fatherly Chastisements, than to quarrel with his Proceedings? Present Afflictions may be far better than a Prosperous Condition, if thou hast Wisdom to improve 'em to the End for which GOD designs 'em. Will it be a Mercy to be made conformable to thy blessed Redeemer, who first suffered, and then entred into his Glory? And will it not be thy Happiness to have the same Mind in thee as was in Christ Jesus? And if Afflicti-

Afflictions do this, surely thou oughtest to thank God for Afflictions, and rejoyce that thou art counted worthy to be a Partaker of Christ's Sufferings. Again, If by Afflictions thy Heart be weaned from the World, and thy Affections set upon the Things above, where there are better and more durable Treasures, thou art certainly an infinite Gainer by the Bargain. And if outward Ease and Prosperity has caused thee to contract sinful Habits and evil Diseases, which are purged away by Afflictions, what Reason hast thou to complain? Or if God by his afflicting Hand hedge up thy way with Thorns, that thou canst not do all the Evil that is in thy Heart, is not this the greatest Mercy that can happen to thee? And if by outward Sufferings thou approve the Sincerity of thy Heart to God, oughtest thou not to rejoyce therein? Thou canst not but know, O my Soul, how apt thou art to start aside from GOD, like a deceitful Bow; and if to cure thee of that Evil, the Floods of Affliction, like those of great Waters, do arise, and force thee

to run to God as thy strong Hold, for Safety and Refuge, is there not a Hand of Mercy to be eyed therein, which thou oughtest thankfully and humbly to adore? And likewise, if Afflictions cause thee to live in the Exercise of Faith, Hope, Charity, Patience, Humility, and other Divine Graces, thou hast exceeding Reason to be thankful to God, and to say with *David*, *It is good for me I have been afflicted*. Lastly, O my Soul, consider how pleasant it will be to look back upon the various Issues of Divine Providence, when God shall have wrought Deliverance for thee? How wilt thou then, O my Soul, exalt and magnify the Lord, and rejoyce in God thy Saviour? Thou art now apt to blame the Conduct of Divine Providence, and to say with good old *Jacob*, *All these things are against me*: But then thou wilt be of another Mind, and conclude that *he hath done all things well*, so that it could not be done better; and break forth into that pathetical Exclamation of the holy Apostle, *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge*

ledge of God ! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out ! And thence conclude with him, That of him, and through him, and to him, are all things : To whom be glory for ever. Amen.

A P R A Y E R.

GRacious and Merciful Father, help me thy poor unworthy Creature to adore thee for that Goodness and Mercy which thou hast been pleased to vouchsafe to me, by all the various Methods of thy Providence towards me ; and more particularly for those Afflictions which it has pleased thee to visit me withal. O Lord, be thou pleased to make them effectual for those gracious Ends and Purposes designed by Thee ; That by them I may be made more conformable to my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who was a Man of Sorrow, and acquainted with Grief ; and who learned Obedience by the things that he suffered ; and having suffered, entred into his Glory ; and that by them also I may find my Heart and Affections drawn off from the Love of the World,

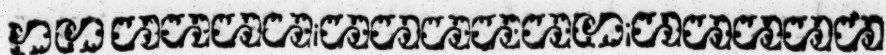
because the Friendship of the World is En-
 mity to God ; but grant, O Lord, that my
 Affections may be raised, and set upon things
 above, even where my blessed Redeemer sits
 at thy right Hand ; that so when he shall
 appear, I also may appear with him in glo-
 ry : Grant also, O Lord, That tho' no Af-
 fliction at the present is Joyous but Grie-
 vous, my Afflictions may be so tempered with
 the Oyl of Mercy by the great Physician of
 my Soul, that they may purge out all those
 sinful Distempers and evil Habits that
 Prosperity and Ease has caus'd me to con-
 tract, that so being purged from my Sins,
 and refined in the Furnace of Affliction, I
 may come forth like Gold. And seeing my
 foolish and deceitful Heart is so ready to
 run after lying Vanities, let thy Chastise-
 ments be as so many Thorns to hedge up my
 Way, that so being stopt from running into
 the Paths of the Destroyer, my Soul may be
 like a Garden inclosed, a Spring shut up,
 and a Fountain sealed : And blessed Lord,
 grant also that by my patient continuance
 in well-doing, under thy afflicting Hand, I
 may Evidence the Sincerity of my Love to-
 wards

wards thee ; which the Waters of Affliction can never quench, nor all the Floods of Tribulation drown. And tho' former Prosperity has caus'd me to forget thee ; yet let this Storm that it has pleased thee in thy Righteous Judgment to bring upon me, cause me to fly unto thee for shelter, who art a Covert from the Storm and from the Rain ; and my only Refuge and Rock of Defence, where I can be safe against the fear of Evil. And as the depressing of a Palm-tree makes it grow the Straighter, and the treading of Cammomile makes it smell the Sweeter, so let my present Afflictions cause the Graces of thy holy Spirit in me to send forth the greater Fragrance, and to appear more Eminently : And further be pleased to grant, O Lord, through thy Wise and all-Disposing Providence, these light Afflictions that are but for a moment, may work out for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory : And that when thou shalt graciously please to accomplish all the purposes of thy Grace towards me by thy Afflicting hand, and caused thine Anger towards me to cease, that my Mouth may be filled with

Songs

Songs of Deliverance, That I may say with thy Servant of Old, Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name; Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits, who forgiveth all thine Iniquities, who healeth all thy Diseases, who redeemeth thy Life from Destruction, and crowneth thee with loving Kindness and tender Mercies! Grant this, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ, thy blessed and only Son, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, and despised the Shame, and is set down at the right Hand of the Majesty on high. To whom, with thee, O Father, and the Eternal Spirit, be ascribed all Honour, Glory, Power and Praise, World without End. Amen.





Meditation VI.

Of our Resignation to the Will of God.

O U R Blessed Saviour, in that most excellent Form of Prayer he has taught us, has made this one principal Petition in it, *Thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven* : And tho' I hope we all make use of this Prayer, yet how few of us are there that understand what we ask ? Tho' there is nothing more pleasing to God, nor nothing that tends more to the Establishment of our own Quiet, than this Resignation of our Wills to the Will of God, which we therein pray for : For could we in Times of greatest Trouble, and at the lowest Ebb of Affliction, consider that it is the Will of God, without whom nothing comes to pass, and whose alone Will is the Rule of all Righteousness, that Consideration would soon allay all those Storms of Passion and Discontent, which are so ready to arise in our
Souls

Souls under such Dispensations of Providence, and make all calm and quiet there. And this was that which silenc'd all the Complaints of God's People in the Days of old, when they were even cover'd with the Clouds of his Anger. Of which, tho' many Instances might be given, I shall confine my self to a few.

AND the first shall be that of Old *Eli* the Priest, who was a good Man, but too indulgent a Father to his wicked Children,---who thereby took Encouragement to Sin; by which God was so provok'd, that he sent *Samuel* to *Eli* with such a Message, as was enough to make his Ears to tingle; importing no less than the Destruction of him and his House, and that *the iniquity of his house should not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever, because his sons had made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.* And yet even under so heavy a Message as this was, the good Old Man resigns himself up to the Will of God, saying, *It is the L O R D, let him do what seemeth him good.*

A S E-

A SECOND Instance shall be that of King *David*, when he was forced to fly from the Rebellion which *Abjalom* (his own Son) had rais'd against him. *Abjalom* having aspir'd to the Kingdom, and wheedled the People out of their Loyalty and Allegiance, upon a Pretence of the Mismanagements of his Father, telling those that came to the King for Judgment in any Cause, That *there was no Man deputed of the King to hear them*, and then wishing *he was made Judge in the Land, that he might do them Justice*: By which sly Insinuations he had stolen away the Hearts of the *Israelites* from his Father: And when by these ill Practices, things were ripe for an open Rebellion, Religion too must be brought in for a Part, and a Vow to the Lord is pretended to be paid at *Hebron*, on which Pretence *Abjalom* having obtained leave to depart from the King, blows the Trumpet of Rebellion throughout all *Israel*, and makes himself King in *Hebron*. This News being brought to *David*, he finds himself in Danger from his Rebellious Son, and thereupon

thereupon resolves to abdicate the Royal City of *Jerusalem*, to which *Absalom* was hastening as fast as he could. In this flight of the King, he had several of his loyal Subjects to attend him, and among them were *Zadok* and *Abiathar* the Priests, and the honest *Levites* with the Ark of God: But the good King, (who was more concern'd for the Ark of God than for himself) knowing that *God had chosen the gates of Zion before all the dwellings of Jacob*, would by no means suffer the Ark to be carried after him, but sends it back again into the City ; (not knowing how God might deal with him) with this noble Resignation of himself to the Will of God : *Carry back* (says he to *Zadock*) *the ark of God into the city ; if I shall find favour with the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation : But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee ; behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.* This is a truly royal Example, and well worthy Imitation.

A THIRD Instance of this Resignation
of

of our Wills to the Will of God, shall be that of King *Hezekiah*, who after his Recovery from Sickneſs, having received the congratulatory Ambaſſadors of *Merodach Baladan* the King of *Babylon*, was ſo pleas'd with the Honour which he thought was thereby done him, that he ſhewed the Ambaſſadors the Houſe of his precious Things, the Silver, and the Gold, and the Spices, and the precious Ointment, and all the Houſe of his Armour, and all that was found in his Treafure. But this thing was diſpleaſing to the Lord, who ſaw *Hezekiah* had his Heart lifted up thereby, and therefore he ſends the Prophet *Iſaiah* to him, with this heavy Meſſage, *Behold the days come, that all that is in thine houſe, and that which thy fathers have laid up in ſtore until this day, ſhall be carried to Babylon; nothing ſhall be left, ſaith the Lord: And of thy ſons that ſhall iſſue from thee, which thou ſhalt beget, ſhall they take away, and they ſhall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.* Wou'd we know now how *Hezekiah* took this doleful Meſſage? Why,

instead of fretting against God, or going about to excuse himself, he resigns himself up to the good Pleasure of God, saying to the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken ; For there shall be peace and truth in my days.*

THE Fourth and last Instance I shall mention, shall be that *Illustrious One* of our *Blessed Saviour* : Who being under a Sense of Divine Wrath, in that bitter Agony and bloody Sweat which he underwent for our Sins, in the Garden, and which none but himself could have born, (for it would have crush'd all Mankind into Nothing, and all the Angels too, to have lain under it) he prayed to his Father, saying, *If it be possible let this cup pass from me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt*, Matth. xxvi. 39. And in the 42d Verse, he went away again, praying the second Time, and said, *O my Father, if this cup may not pass away except I drink it, Thy will be done* : And in Vers. 44. He prayed again the third Time, saying the same Words.

THIS

THIS is indeed the greatest Instance of Resignation to the Divine Will, that can be given. And after such an Instance, sure none can deny that it is a Christians Duty. Nor is it more our Duty than it is our Privilege : For when our Wills are thus resigned to the Will of God, there is no cross Accident that can surprize us, nor no Affliction trouble us ; because we have given our selves up to his Disposal, who best knows how to order all things for us ; and are secur'd in so doing, that all things shall work together for our good.

THIS Resignation of Soul to the Will of God, consists principally in an absolute Acquiescence to the Divine Pleasure, in every State and Condition of Life ; whereby we are willing that God should chuse that Condition which he sees best for us ; whether it be Sickness or Health, Life or Death, Poverty or Riches, Honour or Disgrace : And this without Murmuring, or Repining, or Thinking we are not well dealt with, or that we cou'd have provided better for

H

our

our selves ; but on the contrary we ought to think our present Condition the best for us, be it what it will, because it is the Result of Divine Providence ; and this requires, or supposes in us, a stedfast belief of God's Governing the World, and ordering all Affairs in it according to the Counsel of his own Will. And he that by a stedfast Faith in God (believing him to be the most Wise, most Powerful, most Just, most Merciful and Beneficent Being) has resign'd himself up to his Disposal, is prepared for all Events ; and tho' he may lose Crowns, Kingdoms, Riches, Honours, Friends, Relations, and all things else which are look'd upon as outward Blessings, yet he can never lose that inward Peace of Conscience and Satisfaction of Mind, which the World can neither give nor take away.

The Soul's Expostulation.

CONSIDER, O my Soul, if thy Resignation to the Divine Will, be so absolute a Duty, what Progress thou hast made therein; and whether thou hast so given up thy self to the Will of God, to be absolutely at his Disposal: That thou art so, is indeed unquestionable; and so are the Devils too; for notwithstanding all their Rage, and all their Malice, they cannot break those Chains of Darknes wherein they are bound, to the Judgment of the great Day: But they have not resign'd their Wills unto his, but, on the contrary, do whatever they can to oppose it, tho' in vain---But, O my Soul, is thy being at the Disposal of Divine Providence, the Effect of thy *Choice*, as well as of God's *Power*? If it be so, 'tis what it ought to be. But then, *what means this bleating of the sheep, and lowing of the oxen, as Samuel said to Saul in another Case?* What means all this murmuring and re-

pining at thy present Condition? What means that hankering after those Honours, Riches, and Pleasures, that thou enjoyedst heretofore? And thy present Uneasiness under the want of them? Do'st thou believe that thy present Circumstances are the Result of the Divine Providence, and what God thinks best for thee? Then let thy Mouth be stopp'd for ever; for nothing can be more unreasonable than to complain. How preposterous is it, O my Soul, to pray to God, *Thy Will be done*; and yet when it is done, to murmur? This seems strongly to insinuate, that thou art no farther willing God's Will should be done, than as it suits with thine; which is the Reverse of what thou hast pray'd for. Therefore, O my Soul, either leave off praying, *Thy Will be done*, or cease to let thy Practice thus contradict thy Prayers. Remember, O my Soul, that it is *the foolishness of man that perverteth his way, and makes his heart to fret against the Lord*. And take heed lest thy repining makes thee appear to be such a one. Is it not far

better to give up thy self to his Conduct, by an entire Resignation of thy Will to his, who better knows how to order thy Affairs, than thou thy self do'st? So may the bitter Draught of Affliction be made a wholesome Potion to thee; whereby thou may'st experience the Truth of Samson's Riddle, *Out of the eater comes forth meat, and out of the strong comes forth sweetness.*

A P R A Y E R.

O Almighty and Eternal God, who work'st all things according to the Counsel of thy own blessed Will, and whose Will is the Rule of all Righteousness; Look down in Mercy upon a poor and worthless Sinner before thee, whose Heart was lifted up, and forgot God, in the time of my Prosperity; and therefore thou hast justly depriv'd me of those Mercies which I did not improve to thy Praise: And since I would not serve thee in the Fulness of all things, it is but just I shou'd serve thee in the want of them. And yet such is the Vanity and Deceitfulness

*of my Heart, that I am now apt to repine
 against thy Providence, and fret against
 thee for what thou hast done, instead of
 kissing thy Rod, and submitting to thy
 fatherly Chastisements : O therefore be thou
 pleased to subdue this rebellious Heart of
 mine, and by an entire Resignation of my Soul
 to thy Sovereign Disposal, cause me to rest
 satisfied in every Condition into which it
 shall please thee to bring me : And however
 things may seem to me, through the Blind-
 ness of my Mind, and the Darkness of my
 Understanding, to go contrary to my Inte-
 rest, yet make me to know, O Lord, that it
 is my great Interest to acquiesce in thy Will,
 who doest all things well. Pardon, I hum-
 bly beseech thee, the Stubbornness of my
 Heart, and the Unwillingness of my Will
 to submit to thy good Pleasure ; and make
 me sensible that there is nothing more ob-
 structs thy restoring of former Mercies to
 me, than my murmuring and repining at thy
 present Dispensations. Give me therefore,
 O Lord, such a Composedness of Spirit, that
 I may thankfully entertain whatever thou
 art farther pleased to bring upon me, how
 2 hard*

hard soever it may seem to *Flesh and Blood*; and be made willing to say, *The Will of the Lord be done.* And if the blessed *Angels*, that are always in thy *Presence*, and the *Spirits of just Men made perfect*, rejoyce in the fulfilling of thy *Will*, what am I, sinful *Dust and Ashes*, that I shou'd murmur and repine thereat! Help me, O Lord, to consider, that, however my *Heart* may fret against it, yet thy holy *Will* is the Result of *Infinite Wisdom*, as well as the *Rule of all Righteousness*: And that therefore it is both my *Duty and Interest* willingly to submit thereto. And help me also, O Lord, to believe, That when thou hast humbled me by thy present *Providences*, and brought me to lye at thy *Foot*, in a due *Sense* of my own *Unworthiness*, and a just *Acknowledgment* of the *Righteousness* of thy *Dealings* towards me, that thou wilt again cause the *Light* of thy *Favour* to shine upon me, and make the *Bones* that thou hast broken, to rejoyce. Grant this, O Lord, and whatsoever else thou seest needful for me, for the sake of *Jesus Christ*, thy beloved *Son*, and my alone *Saviour*, who has further taught me to pray, saying, *Our Father, &c.* H 4 Ha-


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**H**AVING by the foregoing Meditations endeavour'd to shew the Uncertainty and Emptiness of our former Enjoyments, and consider'd the Nature and Causes of Afflictions, and how far by our Sins we have brought them upon our selves; and also shewn you the Advantages that accrue to us by a patient Continuance under them; and laid before you both our Duty and Interest, in an entire Resignation of our Souls to the Will of God, under the darkest Dispensations of Divine Providence; I shall, in the next place, as what I think will be very seasonable, furnish you with a Manual of Devotions upon all Occasions, fitted for Times of Trouble, to render it more proper for our present Use.--- And conclude with some general Rules for our daily Practice; and so leave the whole to the Blessing of God, who alone is able to make it effectual to the End for which it is design'd.



A

# Manual of Devotions

F O R

*Times of Trouble and Affliction.*

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Morning-Prayer.

*Psal.* LXXI, LXXIII, LXXIV: Or  
CXXIV, CXXV, CXXVI, CXXIX.

Proper Lessons.

*Dan.* IX. or *Ezra* IX. and X. to Verse  
7. or 2 *Chron.* XXXVI. *Jer.* XIV.  
*Luke* XXI.

*A Collect Confessing and Deprecating Judg-  
ments.*

**O** Lord we are brought into Times  
of great Sorrow and Affliction,  
and we have seen Violence and Spoil  
before

before our Eyes : Our Houses are full of  
 Mourning, and our Hearts of bitter La-  
 mentation : And tho' thy Temples are  
 not shut up, yet several of thy Ministers  
 are shut out of thy Temples ! Dearest  
 Lord ! These things are due to our Sins ;  
 Thou art Just and Righteous in thy  
 Dealings, but we are sinful and wicked :  
 For we have sinned against the great  
 Means of thy Grace, and the Mercies of  
 thy Goodness for many Years vouchsafed  
 to us, and to our Fathers before us : Not-  
 withstanding which, we are full of Hy-  
 pocrisy, full of Prophaness, full of Lewd-  
 ness, and most abominably Wicked :  
 And I, even I, have contributed by a  
 great Measure of my Sins, to fill up  
 those Woes. But O God ! That art mer-  
 ciful, as thou art just, (that delightest  
 not so much to appear just as merciful )  
 pardon those Sins of ours that cause these  
 Woes, and pardon those Sins of mine  
 which concur to that Cause ! And with  
 the Pardon of our Sins, grant us a release  
 of our Punishments : Let all Feuds and  
 Animositics cease, and true Piety and  
 Peace



Peace flourish again amongst us! Thou that out of Evil canst work Good, and out of Confusion didst set up the Order of the World, be pleas'd out of those Evils and Confusions that are upon us, to bring forth a blessed Establishment for us! O thou King of Kings, and Judge of the World, plead the Cause of thy Servants to the Faces of all those who seek to distress and destroy us! And do thou from Heaven own us in our Extremity, and deliver us! O thou that powerfully canst, mercifully do this for us: To the Honour of thy great Name, and to the Comfort and Happiness, both in Body and Soul, of us and ours, and all that truly fear and love thee, and true Religion in and for thee! Even for thy tender Mercies sake, hear us; and for the precious Blood and Passion of our dearest JESUS, help us! Even for his sake, in whose Merits and Mediation alone stands all our Hope and Help, thy dear Son, our only Saviour, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen,*

*A Prayer*

*A Prayer for the Preservation of the Church.*

**O** Lord, the Church is thy Body, and thou art her Head ; she is thy Spouse, and thou art her Husband ; O save thine own Body, preserve thine own Spouse ! Protect her from all Enemies, Men and Devils ! Keep her from all Ills, Errors and Dangers ! Thou didst purchase thy self a Church at the Price of thy Blood, O let no Hand seize and spoil so dear a Purchase !

MORE particularly, O Lord, hear my Prayers for that Part thereof in this Nation : The Petition of a poor unworthy Child for a dear distressed Mother ! Many, O Lord, are the Enemies that wou'd destroy it, and few are the Friends that it has to defend it ; strong are the Arms that are ready to pull it down, and weak are the Hands that are willing to uphold it : But, O powerful God, do not thou desert it ! Uphold it with thy mighty Arm ! Maintain the Religion established amongst us ; and thy holy  
Truth

**Truth and Worship in that Religion !**  
 Maintain a Clergy that may be able by  
 Learning and a holy Life, to defend thy  
 Truth and Worship ; and the Means that  
 may continue such a Clergy : Let not Er-  
 ror and Heresy corrupt it, Ignorance  
 blind it, Superstition infect it, Prophaness  
 over-grow it, Schism tear it, Sacrilege  
 devour it, Atheism lay it waste, Perse-  
 cution make it desolate. Lord, make us  
 as happy as we were, and more thank-  
 ful, and less sinful, that we may be so  
 happy ! Let Errors vanish, Sects cease,  
 Fury leave us, and the Spirit of Truth  
 and Love again possess us ! Let Confu-  
 sions end, and all Irreverences in thy Ser-  
 vice be banish'd from us, and holy Order  
 and Decency be more regarded amongst  
 us. Let Divisions be cemented, and  
 Names of Reproach buried in Oblivion,  
 and the Voice of True Peace and Joy be  
 heard again in our Land. Lord, let us  
 have that Religion which may make us  
 happy in Heaven, and that true Peace  
 which may give Time and Leave to en-  
 joy that Religion ! And to that end, let  
 Power



Power be establish'd upon Righteousness, and employ'd for the Preservation of thy Church and People; and then maintain that Power and them! O thou by whom Kings reign, who hast promised to make them Nursing Fathers, to thy Church, grant us these Blessings, to the Glory of thy Name, the Quiet of our Lives, and the Saving of our Souls! Even for thy dear Son our Saviour's sake.  
*Amen.*

*A Prayer for Mercy to the Nation.*

**O** LORD, we are a Nation not to be beloved, a Nation ready to be ruined for our Iniquities, and for our Sins thou may'st justly destroy us, both Prince and People! But spare us, good Lord, spare us for thy Mercy sake! Let the Blood of Jesus expiate all our Guilts, and the Spirit of Jesus amend our Misdoings! O thou who wouldst not have one Sinner die, suffer not Millions of poor Souls to perish! Be reconciled to us in a Mediator's Blood, and  
 be

be the Reconciler of us in a firm and blessed Peace! God of Pity and Peace, be at Peace with us, and make it for us, even that Peace which none can take from us, do thou make us Partakers of. O thou holy One of God, who camest into the World to take away the Sins of it: O thou Prince of Peace, pity a poor Church and Nation, ready to perish! Pity that Church that hath so long maintain'd thy Truth and Worship in the Nation; pity them who are ready to perish for seeking to maintain thy holy Truth and Worship in thy Church! And do thou from Heaven preserve it, and us, and them. O thou that hast the Power of Heaven and Earth in thy Hand, who stillest the Raging of the Sea, when the Waves thereof roar and lift up themselves, make bare thy holy Arm for our Deliverance; O God make haste to help us, for we are brought very low; stir up thy Strength and come and save us, and make no long tarrying, O our God, but deliver us for thy Mercy sake. *Amen.*

*A Prayer*

*A Prayer for those that are in great Distress and Danger.*

**O** GOD of Power and Pity, who hast promis'd to regard the Prayer of the destitute, and not to despise their cry, Look down, O Lord, from thy Sanctuary, from the Heavens do thou behold the Earth, to hear the groaning of the Prisoners, and to loose those that are in danger of Death, Rescue them from the rage of Violence, and shew thy self Merciful to them in this time of their distress, O thou preserver of Men! And grant them all Graces and Mercies needful for the saving of their Souls! And let them glorify thee both in Life and Death, and do thou glorify them with Life Eternal, through the Merits and Righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord. In whose blessed Name I further beg for Mercy for all that suffer in these Times of Trouble: Chiefly for those that are destitute, for the Widows and the Fatherless: Let thy Mercy be extended to them,



them, in the daily supplying of their several Wants and Necessities: Take them into thy peculiar Care, O thou Father of the Fatherless, and Judge of the Widow: And be thou their Comfort, Help and Succour, for Jesus Christ his sake. *Amen.*

*A Collect for Grace.*

**O** God I can ask no greater Gift than thy Glory, and therefore beg no better Gift than thy Grace; yea, even this perfect, is nothing else but that: Nor can I come at it but by the way of Grace. I do therefore for Jesus Christ his sake, beseech thee bestow on me this blessed Gift, Grace to do thee Service on Earth, that thou may'st give me thy Salvation in Heaven, through the Merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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*A Collect for Peace.*

**O** God, my poor Soul is an humble  
 Suitor for Peace; the Blood of  
 Jesus is my Plea, thy Spirit my Advo-  
 cate: I deserve by my Sins eternal En-  
 mity, but for thy dear Son's sake, have  
 Favour for me: By whom the World is  
 atoned, O let me be reconciled to thee!  
 I know not how to pray this as I ought,  
 but thy Spirit can make effectual Inter-  
 cession for me. Lord, let thy Spirit move,  
 and thy Son make my Peace. Subdue  
 my Lusts; Conquer Satan for me, that  
 my Conscience may have Peace with  
 thee, and I in it, by thy Grace, thro'  
 the Mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord.  
*Amen.*

*A Collect for Health.*

**O** Lord, when I am Sick, let me think  
 I may Dye; when I am in Health,  
 that I may be Sick; that I may not mis-  
 spend the Stock of my Life, but do thee Ho-  
 nour

nour with my Health, and thou may'st give me Comfort for it in my Sickness: Even this, that Sin hath not bound me to my Bed, but thy Providence hath cast me down, which can and will lift me up, or to Health in this World, or to Happiness in a better. Such an Enjoyment of Health give me, I beseech Thee, for Jesus Christ his sake. Amen.

### A Collect for Safety.

**O** Lord, so many Days as I live, so many Lives I owe Thee; Thou renewest my Lease every Day: A poor Tenant at thy Will, I am; and a frail Cottage of Clay, by thy Power I keep. Lord, thou hast hitherto spar'd me, still preserve me; and let me pay (as I can) what I owe of Service, the only Rent thou requirest, for Tenement and Appurtenances, Life, Health, Wealth, and all the good things I have of thee, for which thou both grantest Term of Life, and givest Eternity. This to that, continue, I beseech thee, for his Sake, who was Surety, and is sole Purchaser for me, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*A Collect for Friends.*

**O** Lord, graciously accept my Prayers for all my Kindred and Friends: Do thou good unto them all, O God. To those that err, shew thy Truth; and those that see it, keep from Error: To those that do amiss, give Grace to do better; and those that do well, continue in so doing: To those that are afflicted, give Comfort and Deliverance; to those that prosper, Humility and Temperance: Bless the Sick with Health, and the Healthy from Sickness: Supply those that want; and let those that want not, give Supply. To all, grant thy Grace, O God, and shew thy Mercy: Let Love bind us one to another, and Religion knit us all to Thee; that all who are of Natural Kindred, may meet in heavenly Consanguinity: Even so, Lord, let the Blood of Jesus run through all the Veins, and the Spirit of Jesus go along with the Blood, that the Glory of Jesus may be the End of us all.



And that however we suffer and scatter on Earth, we may live and joy together in the Bliss and Felicity of Heaven, by the Union of that holy Spirit, and Communion of that blessed Blood. *Amen and Amen.*

*A Collect for the Catholick Church.*

**O** God of Peace, send Unity among all that profess thy Name. As they have but one Head, let them be but one Body ; as they are but one Body, let them have but one Spirit : The Spirit of Truth and Holiness, in Doctrine and Life be in all. Cease Schisms and Wars in the Christian World : Let them not spill one another's Blood, for whom thy Son shed his. Let there not be many Hearts under one Head, nor mote Heads with it, least they make a Massacre in thy Body, or a Monster of it. O let thy Sceptre have Obedience, and thine Orders Observance, every where. Suffer none by Delusion or Depravation of Mind, or Ambition of Spirit, to pull down  

I 3
thy

thy Throne, whilst they pretend for thy Sceptre ; and take down thy House to set up thy Glory ; and let Confusion and Tyranny into thy Church, whilst they profess to bring in Liberty and Order. From Violence , Avarice , Sacrilege , Schism, Heresy, Anarchy and Tyranny, O thou King of the Church, do thou keep us. Do thou govern us, and let us obey thee ; Do thou save us, and let us serve thee ; Even all Christian Souls save throughout the World, Dear Jesus. *Amen.*

A Charitable Prayer for Times of Affliction.

**O** Lord, that do'st not willingly afflict the Children of Men ; Behold from thy holy Habitation of Heaven, the Multitude of miserable and afflicted Souls and Lives amongst us, and have Mercy upon us.

HAVE Mercy on all Ignorant Souls, and instruct them ; on all Deluded Minds, and Enlighten them ; on all Seducing and  
Seduced

*Seduced Spirits, and Convert them. Have Mercy on all broken Hearts, and heal them; all struggling with Temptation, and rescue them: All languishing in spiritual Deser-tion, and receive them. Have mercy on all that stagger in Faith, and establish them: That are fallen from thee, and raise them; That stand with thee, and confirm them. Have mercy on all that groan under their Sins, and ease them; That bless themselves, and go on in their Wickedness, and curb and stop them. Jesus! That did'st shed thy Blood for all Souls, to save them; shed thy holy Spirit on all, and heal them.*

*AND Lord, have mercy on all miserable Bodies! Those that are ready to fa-mish for Want, feed them: Those that are bound to Beds of Pain, loose them: Those that are in Prison and Bonds, release them: Those that are under the Fury of Persecution, and cry under the Yoke of Oppression, relieve them: Those that lie smarting in their Pain and Wounds, cure them! Those that are distracted in their Thoughts and Wits, settle them! Those that are in Perils of their Estates and Lives, preserve them:*



*Jesus ! That didst freely distribute thy Comforts and Cures to all Miseries and Maladies of Men, when thou wast on Earth, have mercy on all, and help them ; far or near, with us or from us ; Lord, have mercy on all, even every Son and Daughter of Adam, at this time in Pain and Anguish upon the Face of the Earth, ( where-ever they are, whosoever they be ) what Help I would pray for my self from Thee, or Comfort from Man in their Condition ; I beseech Thee the GOD of all Help and Comfort, to give it them : Take them to thy Care, and tender them, supply them, and succour them. Have Compassion on them, and heal them. Jesus ! That didst give thy Blood for them, deny not thy Bowels to them : Thou that didst Redeem them all, Preserve them : Even all miserable Souls and Bodies, I beseech Thee for thine infinite Mercies sake. Amen.*

*A Prayer against the Temptations of  
Troublesome Times.*

**O** GOD who wilt not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, succour me that the Temptations of this time of Trouble does not overwhelm me : Discover to me the ways of thy Providence so far, that I may see why I shou'd neither deny it, nor doubt it. And make me know thy Judgments to be so unsearchable, and thy Ways past finding out, that I may humbly submit my Will to thy Wisdom, and admire and adore that Justice which I cannot comprehend. Let me not be of so narrow a Mind as to confine thy Work to one World, which thou do'st not finish but in two : Nor let me be such a Creature of Sense, as to believe thou hast no other Reward or Punishment, than what I see and feel. O let my Eyes look to the End of all, which is Heaven, or Hell : And let me envy no ill Man's Happiness, which shall end  
in

in Hell ; nor bewail any good Man's Wretchedness, who shall have Heaven for his End. And let me understand that the Prosperity of Sinners is a heavy Plague, because it spurs them on to Hell, which is the greatest Punishment : And that the Adversity of the Saints is to them a Mercy, because it is thy Rod, to whip them into Heaven, the best Reward. Mean while let me not give a Breast full of thy Peace, for an Arm full of that Wealth which breeds Nests of Vipers and Adders in their Hearts, and continual Stings in their Bosoms : But let me prefer the Sufferings of Innocence, before the Spoils and Triumphs of Violence.

O GOD, since a guilty Conscience is the greatest Punishment on Earth, because next to Hell ; and accusing and condemning thy Providence, and forsaking my Innocence, the greatest Guilt, to that Extremity let no Temptation ever lead me. JESUS! keep me from it by thy Grace and Mercy. *Amen.*

*The*



*The Concluding Prayer.*

**O** Lord, it is thy Promise to grant whatsoever I ask in thy Son's Name; and thou wilt not perform less, because I ask so in his Words. In his blessed Breviary therefore I sum and offer up these my imperfect Prayers; saying, as he hath taught me, *Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

*The Blessing.*

**G** O D the Father bleſs me; **G** O D the Son defend me; **G** O D the Spirit preserve me, and all mine and his, now and evermore. *Amen.*





## EVENING PRAYER.

*Psal.* XLIV, LXXVII, LXXVIII, or  
LXX, LXXXIII, XCVIII, or  
CXXXVII, CXL, CXLI.

Proper Lessons.

2 *Chron.* XIII, or XX. 1 *Cor.* X. or  
*Jude's Epistle.*

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*A Collect or Prayer against Revenge.*

**O** THOU to whom Vengeance  
belongeth, keep me from a re-  
vengeful Spirit, that I fall not into the  
Hands of thy Vengeance: And since it  
is thy Will that I should exercise Pity,  
and Patience, and Pardon, let me not  
study Revenge, and Returns of Injuries.  
What tho' I have lost my Estate wrong-  
fully, and been turn'd out of my Place  
for my Loyalty to the King, yet have I  
not

not justly deserved it for my Rebellion against thee my God ? Why should I then meditate Revenge against the Instruments whom thou, O Lord, hast made the just Executioners of thy Will for my deserts : O help me rather to look unto thee, who have justly suffered these things to befall me for my Sins, than to study Revenge against those that have injur'd me. Thou, O most meek and merciful Saviour, didst pray for thy bloody Enemies ! O let me then forgive my greatest Foes ! Committing my Cause to thee, who wilt do Justice for me on them, if I seek not to revenge my self ; and for thy self upon me, if I do. Thine, O Lord, is the Sword of Vengeance, and thine is the sharpest Sword. O let me not dare to take it out of thy Hand ! Lest while I strike others, I fall justly by thy Sword. Tho' flesh and blood provoke me to it, let thy holy Spirit withhold me from it : And cast and keep out of me that evil Spirit, by thy Power, O good God and Saviour, for thy infinite Mercies sake. *Amen.*



## A Collect or Prayer against Malice.

**O** Thou Divine Goodness, that wouldst not have me be of a revengeful Spirit, neither wouldst thou have me be of a malicious Spirit; and therefore, O Lord, be pleased to keep me from Malice, which is the very Soul of Satan, and Sin of the Devil: Thou, O God, art Love, but he is Hatred; and if Malice be in me, I shall be as he is, even one whom (unless thou hatest thy self) thou canst not love: Thou hast commanded that I should love my Enemies, and wouldst not have me be malicious against them, nor bear them ill will for what they have done to me, but rather to pray for them; yea, tho' they use me despitefully, thou wouldst not have me be despiteful towards them. And therefore from such a hateful and damning Disposition, O Lord, deliver me: Let not Satan's Brand be on my Breast, and his Soul in my Body, lest being marked for him, he seize me as his own. But, O Lord, do thou stamp me as thy own, and set the Seal of thy  
Love

*Love on my Heart, that I may be owned by thee, and have thy Badge continually upon me, which is, That we love one another: O let me not wear the Devil's Badge, in a visible or secret Malice to any. Make me, O Lord, a Child of thy Family, a Dove of thy Flock, without any gall or rancor, a Lamb of thy Fold, harmless to all, and not doing Mischief to any; but delighting, like thy blessed Self, to do good unto all; even for his sake, who is holy, harmless, and undefiled, who did good to all, and evil to none, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

*A Collect for Grace.*

**O** THOU that hast promised thy holy Spirit to them that ask it, give me thy Grace, O God; that being strengthened thereby, I may with Courage and Constancy engage all my spiritual Enemies, and subdue them: That I may pass my Pilgrimage here in thy Fear, and at last receive my Triumphs in thy Glory: Through the Merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*A Col-*

*A Collect for Peace.*

**O** GOD of Peace which art incomprehensible, give me thy Peace, which passes all understanding: Let me so live according to thy Rule, that I may have Peace with my Conscience; and let me be so ruled by thy Will and Word, that my Conscience may have Peace with thee. Lord, make an everlasting Peace with me, and let me never do that which has any tendency to break that League. Dear Jesus! Let it be ratified and confirmed in thy Blood, and maintain it in me by thy holy Spirit. *Amen. Amen.*

*A Collect for Health.*

**I**T is the wonder of thy Providence, O Lord, that a Body subject to Thousands of Frailties, and Casualties every Day, should enjoy Health or Life an Hour; yet through thy Mercy I have both at this instant.

Lord



Lord, continue to me what I have, and let me so improve it to thy Honour, that thou may'st continue it ; and suffer me not by any Sin to provoke thee to take it away from me, and to smite me with Sicknes. Hear me, I beseech thee, for Jesus Christ his sake. *Amen.*

### A Collect for Friends.

**O** Lord, it is Joyful for Friends to love and live together on Earth ; but the Joy of all Joys to live with thee in Heaven. I beseech thee, let this Happiness be the Portion of all whom thou hast made more Nearly and Dearly to be Mine. Let us so live in thy Service, that we may dye in thy Salvation. In the mean while, what we want of any earthly Good necessary for us, Give us : What is amiss, and offensive to thy Heavenly Majesty in any of us, Forgive us : What is requisite to make us so to serve thee now, that thou may'st save us then, in thy Bounty bestow upon us ; Even Truth and Grace, aright to See and Seek thy Face, in Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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## A Prayer for the Kingdom.

**O** Lord, Our Distractions threaten Desolations to us, Preserve us ! Our Sins cry aloud for thy Vengeance upon us, Pardon us ! Thy Mercies have been great to this Nation ; O Lord, remember them ! Thy Deliverances of us have been many ; O Lord, renew them ! That Iniquity be not our utter Ruin, give us Repentance ! The Guilt and Blood upon us, Forgive ! Our Breaches, Repair ! The Order which may bring Peace, Establish ! The Government thou hast Establish'd, maintain ! What is Just and Right in thine Eyes, set up ! What thou seest Evil, cast down ! What makes the Nation miserable, Remove ! What may make it happy, Restore ! Lord, for thy Mercies sake, say, We have been miserable enough, and make us more happy. Let the Light of thy Countenance shine again upon us, and grant us thy Peace ! The Power and Authority which may procure it, Preserve ; and those to whom thou hast given that Power, Bless them to us, and us in them,

*them, and all in thee. For Jesus Christ  
his sake. Amen.*

*A Collect for the Church Catholick.*

**B**Ehold, O God and Father of our Lord  
Jesus Christ; I, a Christian, and  
Child of his True Catholick Church, Pray  
thy Mercies on my good and great Mother,  
and all my Brethren, and her Children, in  
thee and thy Son. For Errors amongst them,  
send them Truth; For Schism, Unity; For  
Superstition, Warrantable Worship; For  
Confusion, Order; For Prophaneness, Piety;  
For Variance, Concord; For War, Peace;  
That all may, as one Body, with one Mind,  
and Heart, and Mouth, and Knee, Believe,  
Love, Confess, Adore, and so Serve Thee,  
and Him whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ,  
( the Great Lord and Common Saviour of  
us all ) as thou may'st save us all in the  
World to come! O Thou Head of the Church,  
Save thy Body! By thy Blood, Cleanse it;  
by thy Spirit, Sanctify it; by thy Power  
Preserve it, and every Limb of it, dear  
Jesus! Amen.



*A Collect for the Church.*

**O** Christ, Head of thy Body the Church, let not this poor Member of it amongst us, Perish! What it is, Thou seest, Lord; with Pity behold us: What it was, Thou knowest; O Lord, in Mercy restore us: Thy Primitive Order in Christian Truth and Worship, for the saving of Souls, which is cast down, set up: The present Confusions, Distractions, Innovations, Errors, which are got up, cast down: Set up thy Glory, O Lord, amongst us; And what is set apart to support it, do Thou maintain, and continue to us, and our Posterities after us, for Jesus Christ his sake. *Amen.*

*A Collect for Safety.*

**F**orgive, O Lord, the Forfeitures I have made of thy Protection, by the Wandrings of my Life: And tho' I have not been (as I should) a Dutiful Child; yet be Thou, O Lord, (as Thou  
ever

ever art) a Merciful Father: Forget not thy Fatherly Goodness to me, who pray thy Pardon for offending Thee, Thy Grace to serve Thee; and Thy Providence to preserve me this Night, and evermore, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*A Prayer for one in Affliction*

**O** Lord, That Affliction which is now my Lot, is the Result of thy good Pleasure; and as such, let me eye it and improve it, to reclaim me from evil Ways, and to direct my Course into those that are good. If it be so grievous to bear it for a Time, what is it, O God, to suffer it, and ten thousand times more Misery than it, for Ever! Then if it be ill, let it be thy Rod to reclaim me; and if good, thy Staff to make me stand better in Grace, and advance me to thy Glory; thy Fan to purge me, thy Furnace to prove me. So Adversity to my Body be the Prosperity of my Soul, let it come and welcome, O Lord; that

my Soul may at last everlastingly prosper with Thee, in that Day of Bliss which knows no Cloud of Ill, nor End of Good to Eternity. Since Affliction is a Sign of thy Mercy, a Badge of thy Favour, and a Means of Glory, let me not be impatient under it, lest I perpetuate my Woes to two Worlds; and whom Thou hast but for a Time, make my self miserable for ever. Blessed Jesus! who didst go from a Cross to a Crown, and doest Cross me to Crown me, let me carry mine patiently, that I may come to thy Throne; and not cast my self from a Cross of Woe, into a Gulph of Confusion. From such Miscarriages under my present Afflictions, O Lord deliver me. Dear Jesus! By the Merits and Example of thy holy Cross, and by the Virtues and Works of thy holy Spirit, Do it for me, and Sanctify it to me. *Amen.*



*A Concluding Prayer.*

**B**Ehold, O Lord, what I have prayed unto thee for, and grant, I humbly beseech thee, the Requests that I have put up unto Thee this Evening, and hear the Petitions of thy Servant: And do for me, for the Nation, for thy Church, and for all Estates and Conditions therein, not only according to what I have prayed, but according to what I should and ought to have prayed, and what any else have prayed with me, for Jesus Christ his sake, in whose Name I have presented them, with whose Words I desire to Perfume and Perfect my Prayers: Beseeching Thee, That his Spirit may breathe in those Words in which I know I Pray both what, and as I ought: And therefore (as Devoutly) Confidently say, *Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

## The Blessing.

**B**lessed are the Afflicted and Troubled,  
 and those that mourn under those  
 Calamities we feel and fear : The Blessing  
 and Comfort of God the Father, and the  
 Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the  
 Consolations of the holy Spirit, be upon me,  
 and upon all such sad and sorrowful Souls  
 with me, this Night and evermore. Amen.





Meditations and Prayers  
FOR THE  
HOLY COMMUNION,  
BOTH  
*Before, At, and After Receiving.*

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*A Meditation before the Receiving the holy  
Communion.*

O My dear Lord! Thy Passion makes me full of all Passion! I am in Love, and yet I hate; I have my Longings and my Loathings: I both rejoice and grieve, and cherish Hope and Fear! I am incens'd and ravish'd.

*I am in love with thee, O blessed Jesus! I am enamour'd of thy Person, O thou God-Man! The Son of God! The Beauty of Heaven and Earth! The  
Centre*



Centre of all created and uncreated Excellency ! The Mirror of the God-head ! The Wonder of Angels ! The Glory of Mankind ! I am inflamed with thy Love ! Thou mad'st thy Love to *Lazarus* legible in thy *Tears* ( *see how he loved him, said the Jews* ) and shall not I read it in thy *Wounds* ? They saw Love in thy *dripping Eye*, and shall not I in thy *bleeding Side* ? They, in the *hot Water* thou didst bestow on his *dead Body*, and shall not I see it in that *reaking Blood* thou sheddest for my *lost and dying Soul* ? O let not my Heart be so hard to see those Wounds of so great Love to me, and yet to have no Woundings of Affection for thee ! For thee, Lord ! Yes, and all in Heaven and Earth that have Relation to thee.

I am also *in Love* with the *God and Father* of my Lord Jesus Christ, who would give his Son, his only Son, the Son of his Love, so to suffer on Earth, for a Time, that I might not suffer for ever in Hell.

I am also *in Love* with thee, O thou  
Blessed

*Blessed and Holy Spirit of G O D*, who didst anoint Jesus to be my Christ ; and thereby Inaugurate him to his Crown of Thorns, and blessed, tho' most bloody Passion, which he suffered for me.

I am *in Love* with the *whole Blessed Trinity*, whose glorious Essence and ineffable Unity I adore, tho' I cannot comprehend ; and whose Counsels fill my Soul with the highest Admiration, tho' I am never able to search out their unfathomable Depth.

I have also *Love for the Sons of Men*, for them especially for whom my Lord Jesus shed his precious Blood, thereby to make them *the Sons of God*, and Brothers of Christ : Thy Cross, O Jesus, shall make all Mankind my Friends ; for where thou gavest thy *Blood*, why should not I give my *Heart* !

THUS, Lord, *I Love all for thee*, and thee in all : And now I will *love my self* for thy sake amongst them : O Lord, I am one in whom is thy *Flesh*, a *Man* ; I am one in whom is thy *Spirit*, a *Christian* ; I am one for whom thou didst shed thy *Blood*,

*Blood*, on whom thou hast shed thy *Spirit*: ( A redeemed esteemed Man by thee) and shall I be so poor, as to value *Dirt* to thy *Blood*? Shall I be tempted to give my self *from thee*, to the *Flesh*, and to the *World*? O Lord, I will value *thy Blood more*, I will keep *the Spirit better*, I will set a higher Price on *my self*, than to sell thy *blessed Purchase* to the *Devil*, for a base Piece of *flesh*, and a small Portion of the *World*. So am I, and let me ever be in love with thee, O Lord.

BUT, O Sin! I am in hate with thee, for my own, and for my Saviour's sake! O thou Enemy of God and Man, how execrable art thou! More than *Heart can think*: That madest him lamentable *more than Eye saw*.

AND, O Devil! I hate thee, who didst tempt Man out of Paradise, and so draw Christ to a Cross: And could thy Temptations have prevail'd, and thy Power been equal to thy Malice, wouldst have cast the second *Adam* out too; that so nor the First, nor his Seed, might ever have come in again. AND,



AND, O *World* ! I abhor thee, as the Imp of the Devil ; who of his *Jews* and *Gentiles* couldst find Hands for such horrid Acts and Sins that made those bloody Passions. So *Sin*, *Devil*, *World*, for the Death of my King, and Lord, and Christ, you have my Hate.

I have also my *Longings* too : I long for the Lord ! My soul longeth for God, even the living God. (Yea, even for the dying God ! ) When shall I come and appear in the presence of God ? God dying once, yet living ever ! When shall I come before the dying-living God ?

I long for the *Chariot* that will bring me to thee, and will Kifs it, tho' it be a *Cross*.

I long for the *Inn* which will lodge me near thee, and will Embrace it, tho' it be a *Grave*.

I long for the *Bed* which will raise me to thee, and will climb to it, tho' it be a *Gibbet*.

O *Cup of Salvation*, I will not refuse thee, tho' full (even to the Martyrs Measure) of Blood ; if from him, thou shalt

shalt be drank, and yet deem'd nothing to thy Saviour's Blood.

I long to be in thy *Courts*, where thou art present in *Spirit*! To be in thy *holy Temple*, (which is thy *Chamber*) at the *Altar and Table*, which is the *Chair of thy Presence*; yea, where in high and ineffable Mystery, I find a presence of thy *Body*, and keep both a *Commemoration* and *Communion* of it and thy *Blood*. But as I have my *Longings*, so I have my *Loathings*.

I *Loath the Life* in which I cannot see Thee: At best, an *Exile*; at worst, a *Trouble* to thee.

I *Loath my self* for casting away Love on so base and unworthy a *Life*; where I do either *crucify thee with my Sins*, or *wound thee with my Miseries*! Where I renew thy *Passion* by my *GUILTS*, or thine *Agony* by my *Conflicts*.

I *loath my self* for loving thee no more, who hast lov'd me so much. I likewise *loath my self* for loving Sin so much, which has been so great an *Enemy* to my dearest Lord. --- But then I have also my *Joys*.

I Joy in thy *Cross*, not in thy *Grief*,  
 O Christ. For can I see thy Sacred Body  
 all *Gore*, and my Heart not *bleed*? The  
 Spear be *in thy Heart*, and *no Sword at*  
*mine*? I will not, I cannot endure it, O  
 my dearest Lord: No! I Joy in the *Root*,  
 thine *Infinite Mercy*, O God; And in the  
*Fruit*, the *Perfect Redemption of Man*!  
*It is finished*! Yes, Blessed be the Blood  
 that was the Price, and blessed be the  
 Body that laid out that Blood! The Sa-  
 tisfaction is full! Salvation is sure! Sin  
 is nail'd! Hell foil'd! Satan chain'd! The  
 World baff'd! The Flesh wounded!  
 Death slain! The Grave buried! Every  
 Adversary's Power is conquer'd by Christ,  
 Triumphant in the Chariot of his Cross  
 over all: *All is finished*.

THERE are some very lavish in  
 their Praises of the *Wood* of the *Cross*:  
 But it was the *Blood of the Cross* by which  
 Redemption is purchased. And what  
 Good doth not grow from and upon that  
 Pulpit of Repentance, Pillar of Faith,  
 Anchor of Hope, Magazine of Charity,  
 Armory of Mortification, School of Pa-  
 tience,



tience, Mirror of Obedience, Rock of Constancy, Shop of Humility, (the whole Duty of a Christian.) O *blessed Root* of *God's Mercy*, that bringest forth the *happy Fruit* of *Man's Grace and Glory*! O *Tree of Death*, more blessed than the *Tree of Life*, that hast such a *Root*, and such *Fruit* : Thus are my Joys Triumphant in thy Cross - - - But

I Grieve to see Thee Crucify'd *again*, O Christ, and my Soul is Crucify'd for having a Hand in thy Cross: Woe to the World for Offences, which make Thee bleed afresh, and bring Thee to thy Cross again. Woe is me that see Thee daily Crucify'd betwixt Hereticks and Schismatics, Thieves of thy Truth; between Hypocrites and Profligates, Thieves of thy Grace; amidst Men of Intemperate Heats and Cools in Religion, Thieves of thy Honour.

I Grieve to see Thee Crucify'd in *vain* : So much of the World lost, when all was paid for! A Price sufficient to have ransom'd not a World only, but a Hell-full of Devils, Effectual only to a Handful of Men.

Men. Yea, even within thy Holy Pale, which should preserve thy Blood to a drop, wo is me! how is it spilt to a stream! Whilst so many make void by their Sins, the healing Virtue of thy precious Blood! By Unbelief, how many Millions are lost out of the Church! And by Misbelief, how many Thousands in it! And by Miscarriage of Life, how many Thousands of Millions both in and out! My Heart bleeds to see thy Creed without Faith, thy Decalogue without Obedience, thy Prayer without Use, thy Sacraments without Reverence! Nay, to see it made Faith, Conscience, Devotion, Zeal, to have no Respect to Sacrament, Prayer, Decalogue or Creed! And, Lord, what Tears, even of Blood, are sufficient to bewail it! O my dear Lord! Can my Eyes see thee thus Crucify'd again Twice, and in vain Once, and my Heart not grieve! - - - And yet tho' I grieve, I am not without Hope. And,

I hope in Thee, and the Blood of thy Cross alone. I hope for Pardon, because I read it seal'd in thy Blood! I hope for

L

Salva-

Salvation, because I find it Purchased under that Seal. Wilt thou not make good thy Seal? Wilt thou not prefer thy Purchase? Nor Sin nor Devil then shall Damn me, O Christ; he shall not steal thy Purchase, nor make void thy Seal. Thy Blood is my Plea against both: In it I see my Pardon and Salvation written; nor care I, so thou be my Advocate, for Saint or Angel to set to their Hands. I hope in Thee for my Salvation.

AND so I do for my Mother's too, the Spouse bought with thy Blood, and lov'd as thy Body. O Lord, thou art her Saviour, and shall she want thy Salvation? O let her not want thy Bowels, for whom thou gavest thy Blood! Behold her Miseries, and forgive her Sins! Till thy Blood hath no Virtue, she is not without Hope. And I know, O Lord, that the Streams of thy Blood are not yet drain'd, and that the Sea of thy Mercy still flows as fresh and free as ever. And therefore will I hope still.---But,

I fear too: I dread Temptation; Thy Cross was made of *Adam's* Tree: I fear, because



because he fell : I dread Desertion : I want both *David's* Grace, and *Solomon's* Wisdom ; and yet though I had both, I shou'd fall, if thou forsak'st me : On the Cross thy Disciples left thee, but let me never leave thee : I dread Apostacy ! O keep me from that Sin from which even thy Blood, thy Cross cannot or will not save me. But then,

I fear my self for all this : As my Sins nail'd thee to thy Cross, so my Corruption rivets me in my Sins. The Heart is deceitful above all things, and mine is desperately wicked, and full of divers Lusts and Abominations. And therefore from a Tempest of Temptation, from the Gulph of Spiritual Desertion, from the Precipice of Apostacy, and from my self above all, by the Vertue of thy Cross, deliver me, O Lord.

O Christ, my Spirit is incens'd, and I am full of Indignation for the Affronts and Injuries done unto thee ! To see thy Blood spilt or scorn'd ; to see thy Passion forgot, or abus'd ; Thy Love without Memory or Value, thy Pains without

Belief or Remorse. Who can endure, O blessed Jesus! to see thy Cross made the Devil's Standard? And thy Wounds (the only Shelter for Sinners) turn'd into Cities of Refuge for Sins? To see thy Passion made the Nurse of Presumption, and thy Mercy the Milk of all Abominations? When Indignation kindles in thy poor Servant's Soul at so great Indignities, how is it that Wrath flames not out in Thine? How is it? Even so it is, because thou art Jesus! Lovest to save, and art loth to destroy; Waitest our Repentance, and wavest thy Vengeance.

I am ravish'd with that good Spirit of thine, O Christ! Thou hadst it on the Cross, and keepest it on the Throne! Where it appears, it doth ravish me: In thy Lips! Thou Prayest their Pardons, that are shedding thy Blood! And thirstest for their Salvation, that are Butcher-ing thy Body! In thy Arms! Stretch'd out to Embrace all on Earth, and therefore strike not, tho' in all the Power of Heaven! In thy Eyes! As Thou wast with one of my Mothers, I am with one

of Thine. Thy Fury frights me, O Lord: Thy Favour is that One : The Eye with which thou didst look at the poor Thief, and give him both thy Pardon and thy Paradise: The Eye by which thou didst look at thy dear Mother ; and amidst all thy Wounds chuse her a Guardian, and have her in thy Cares. The Eye with which thou didst look at the dear Disciple, and Adopt him, of thy Servant, thy Mother's Son. The Eye by which thou didst look at poor Sinners to be saved, a Church to be bought, and World to be ransom'd : But, in thy Heart, O Lord, O what an Apparition see I there ! Through the bloody Door of thy Wounded Breast, a House full of Nothing but Goodness, Pity, Patience, Mercy ! O what a Perspective is there by the way of the Spear ! To see the Prospect of a poor Sinner's sole Delight, a Heart full of Grace and Favour, in the Breast of a Jesus ! A Saviour's Heart ! From that Heart, with that Eye, O Christ, behold the Afflicted Mother (thy Church) and thy dear Disciple, her Child ! Breathe Comfort to her for whom



thou gavest Blood! And to him who is the Son of her Comfort! Make Peace between Mother and Children, where there should be Love. Let them live by one Spirit, that are bought with one Blood! And no longer be one another's Cross, but bear one another's Burdens.

Dart, Lord, from that blessed Eye of Pity, these Favours on the Face of that bleeding Body ; and with thy Arms, Nail'd once to a Cross, now extended on a Throne, Embrace her ; and uphold her in Life ! Advance her Throne for whom thou didst endure thy Cross ; O Thou who didst with thy Fingers work Heaven and Earth, and upholdest all things by the Word of thy Power, those whom the World treads under foot, take thou into thy Arms ! In thy blessed Arms, O thou Omnipotent and All-merciful Maker and Saviour of the World, in thy blessed Arms I leave the wounded Mother, and at thy Feet I lay the bleeding Child.

JESUS, nourish these holy Passions in me, which my Heart hath conceived,  
and

and my Tongue now brought forth before Thee! Let thy holy Passion ever breed them in me, and thy Spirit Nurse them for thee, even by the Merits of thy bloody Passion, I beseech Thee. *Amen!*  
*Amen.*

*A Prayer before Coming to the holy Communion, Acknowledging and Deprecating our Unworthiness.*

**O** Lord, I am every where in thy Presence, and under thy Eye, and therefore shou'd be prophane no where ; but thy special Presence and Face is in thy Temple : There therefore I should be more holy ; and thy Chair and Seat is at thy Table, and therefore there I should be yet more so : Even the Angels are not pure enough for such a Heavenly Presence ; how then shall a poor mortal Man appear at so high and holy a Service ? How shall I dare to Communicate with Thee, that deserve not to come before Thee ? Lord, since I cannot come as I shou'd, pure, I will endeavour by

thy Grace, to come as I may, penitent.  
 I will be more humble, because less holy ;  
 and more wash'd , because so filthy.  
 And O Lord, give me Grace so to come.  
 Let me look over my Life in the Glafs  
 of thy Law, and make me wash with  
 my Tears what is polluted in my Ways ;  
 and cleanse in Christ's Blood what I  
 wash with my Tears : O Lord, in a Bath  
 of this Water warm'd in that Blood,  
 flowing from a Sinners bleeding Heart,  
 and Saviour's bloody Side, shall I not be  
 clean if I wash ? Pierce my Heart, O Lord  
 that I may repent ; open my Heart that  
 I may believe, that so I may wash and  
 be clean ! Tho' I did not live, let me  
 believe aright ; and let me love whom I  
 do believe, even thee, O God, Father  
 of our Lord Jesus Christ, who didst send  
 thy Son to shed his Blood and redeem  
 me ; and thee, O Son of God, who  
 didst come and shed thy Blood to make  
 a Bath and heal me ; and also thee, O  
 holy Spirit of God, by whose Grace and  
 Work upon my Heart, I come to have  
 the Benefits of that Blood. And whom  
 I love,



I love, let me not grieve ; Lord, let me no more offend thee : Let my Heart be set to serve thee, resolved to please thee : And do thou accept me, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

A Prayer before the Holy Communion,  
to be Pardon'd, and Prepar'd for it.

**D**EAR Saviour ! that hast given thy Flesh and Blood to be my meat and drink, and now inviteest me to those heavenly Dainties. Who am I, woful and wicked Wretch that I am, that I should dare with my unworthy Hands to receive those high and holy Mysteries ! Originally unclean, actually defiled ; and even since my last Coming and Communicating ( for all my Vows and Protestations before thee ) again and again polluted. In these Straits and Stresses of Spirit, how shall my Soul be satisfied ? If I come not at thy Call, I rebel against thy Mercy : If I come, I trespass upon thy Purity : O my God, I will not stand out a Rebel ; but rather fall down an humble Suppliant before thee. I

*am*

*am guilty, Lord, pardon me ; I am polluted,  
 Lord, purge me : Tho' guilty, tho' polluted,  
 I am thy ransomed Soul, dear Redeemer,  
 save me ! Let the Merits of thy precious  
 Blood, cleanse me from the Guilts upon me !  
 Let the Graces of thy holy Spirit sanctify  
 me from the Stains within me ! Let the  
 Sighs and Tears which come from my bleed-  
 ing Heart, wash off those Blots by Virtue  
 of that precious Blood ! Let the Cries and  
 Prayers which now come from my believing  
 Soul, obtain those Graces from thy holy  
 Spirit. True Repentance and Humility, a  
 lively Faith and Charity, with all those  
 holy and heavenly Thoughts and Affections  
 which may dispose and prepare me for thee !  
 By these fit my Soul for thy self, and my  
 Body with my Soul to be an holy House  
 and Habitation for thee ! Let thy holy Spi-  
 rit and Body enter into me ; come, dear Re-  
 deemer, come to the Price of thy Blood ; seize  
 thine own, and save me : Possess my Soul,  
 feed me, and preserve me. Hereafter let  
 me have more Grace than to grieve thee.  
 Give me care to keep my Body ( thy Tem-  
 ple ) more pure from Sin, and holy to thee ;  
 and*

*and my Heart (thy Bed) more clean from Lust, and undefiled before thee! In the Strength of thee, the living Bread, let me grow more able to serve thee. And by Virtue of so near an Union and Communion with thee, let not mine, but thy holy Spirit from henceforth lighten, lead and enliven me; that I may shun Sin, which thou hatest, and daily do those Duties of Devotion and Charity which please thee: So let this holy Sacrament at once Seal to me thy Mercy and my Glory; where I shall for ever Communicate with thee in perfect Purity and Felicity! To that happy Communion, by thy Grace, dear Saviour, ever prepare me; and now for a holy Communion with thee. Amen, Amen: Say Amen Lord Jesus.*

*A Prayer at our Receiving the holy Communion.*

**D**IDST Thou not invite me to thy holy Table, O Lord, I durst not come: Now thou callest me, I dare not keep away: And yet when I do consider Who and What is here, I fear  
and



and tremble to come. Thou, O Lord, art a holy and dreadful Majesty, and so thy Mysteries be. Holy Bread, and holy Wine ; a most holy Body and Blood : No taint in his Blood, who is GGD as well as Man : The Lamb of God, Immaculate, Undeiled, without Spot ; All-pure, most High and Holy ! But alas, I am unclean, unclean, unclean ; originally, actually, every way ; in Heart, Hand and Lips ; throughout Childhood, Youth and Manhood, most unworthy to approach a Presence so pure, who am so unholy !

TRUE, Lord ! But I lament my Uncleannefs, I renounce my own Unworthinefs : I come, not because worthy, but needy ! I come to be made clean and worthy : That Body and Blood can make me clean, ( it is my Saviour's. ) And his Merits can make me worthy ! ( They are thy Son's, O Lord ! ) And here is a Conveyance of that blessed Body and Blood ; ( It is thy Sacrament ! )

LORD ! Think me worthy for his sake, and make me worthy for thy Mercies

Mercies sake, by my coming. Give my Sins, thy Pardon; my Soul, thy Grace; my Self, thy Acceptance in thy Beloved. And what thou doest convey, seal to me by what I now receive from thee, the blessed Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*A Prayer and Thanksgiving after the receiving the holy Communion.*

**P**ARDON, O Father, the Errors and Infirmities of thy poor Child, which have pass'd in thy holy Service, whether before, or in, or since the Sacrament. And in and for the precious Blood of thy holy Child Jesus, of which I have had the holy Communion, seal me my Pardon! And behold and accept thy Servant, from a Heart full of thy Love, pouring out Praises to thee, for the inestimable Benefits received in those high and holy Mysteries! What am I, O Lord, or what is in me, that thou shouldest do this great Honour and Favour to me? I am unworthy to touch the Thresholds of  
thy

thy House, and thou hast taken me to thy Table! I am not worthy to stand amongst thy Saints, and thou hast made me sit with my Saviour! I am not worthy to come before thee, and fall down before thy Footstool, and thou hast been pleased to come into me, and make my Heart thy Throne! I am not worthy to eat the Bread of Men, and thou hast given me the Bread of Angels; yea, Lord, the Angels hunger, but have not this Bread! What they admire, I have received; whom they adore, I have entertained: The Body and Blood of Jesus, their Mirror, is my Meat: Christ and they are Two, but I and my Saviour are One, Flesh of his Flesh, and Bone of his Bone; one Blood, one Body! O unspeakable Mystery! O incomparable Mercy!

LORD, I beseech thee, since of my self I cannot enough praise thee, make me some way worthy of thee: Let my Hands which have received thy blessed Body and Blood, be henceforth sacred, and do no Deeds that may offend thee:

Let



Let my Lips which have touched those holy Myſteries, be hallowed from all Words that may diſpleaſe thee : And let my Heart, the Habitation of my Lord and Saviour, be hereafter Holy, and no vain Thoughts lodge within me ! As I am one with him in Body and Blood, let me be one in Spirit ; the Spirit of Wiſdom, Love and Holineſs : Truly to know thee, ſerve thee, and cleave unto thee. By the bleſſed Sacrament of his Body and Blood, convey it to me. Confirm it in me : Let it be to my Soul the Signet of thy Love, and Seal of thy Glory. And even for the precious Merits of that Blood and Body, receive me to it, I beſeech thee, that I may be one in everlaſting Union and Communion with thee, for Jeſus his ſake. *Amen. Amen.*

A Thankſ-

A Thanksgiving for a devout Soul, after  
Receiving the Communion.

**O** Thou that hast given the Bread of  
Heaven to feed me, give me the  
Tongue of Angels to praise thee ! Lord, the  
very Angels are not blessed with such Bread !  
O what an high Mystery and Mercy is this,  
that my Saviour is my Sustenance, and  
their Maker my Meat ! The Body and Blood  
of Christ, the Eternal Son of God, to be in  
an Holy Communion, eaten and drunken  
by the Mouth of a mortal Man ! O the in-  
finite condescending Goodness of a gracious  
God ! To make my humble Heart the Ha-  
bitation of his Holiness ! To come to me,  
enter in me, and become one, not by Re-  
conciliation only, but heavenly Union and  
Communion with me ! O miraculous Union !  
O mysterious Incorporation ! O happy Soul,  
that art so near to thy Saviour ! O blessed  
Saviour, that art so near my Soul ! O wretched  
Soul, if thou esteem'st any thing too dear  
for such a Saviour ! Wilt thou not give  
thy Body and Blood for his Truth ? Wilt  
thou

*thou not offer thy Life as a Sacrifice to his Glory? O Lord! Let my Soul, which by thy Sacrament is made so happy, by my Sins never be made wretched. And since I have received thy Body and Blood, let thy Spirit take Possession of my Heart, and Guide me, Lead me, Command me, and Rule me: Be thou the Spirit of my Soul, and Soul of my Body. Let not the Flesh, World, or Devil, have any Power in me. Live! O Live Thou in me, O Christ! Live in my Earthly Tabernacle, and let me live for ever with Thee in thy heavenly Habitation! Even by the Merits and Virtues of thy precious Body and Blood, O sweet Jesus, I beseech Thee. Amen.*



**I** AM now come, through the Divine Assistance to the last thing I promised, which is, *Some General Rules and Directions for our Daily Practice.* In which I shall be very short, a few things well digested, being better than many; which oftentimes prove burdensome to the Memory, and hinder, instead of help.



I HAVE already set down a Form of Prayer to be us'd Morning and Evening in Times of Affliction; besides which, I will add,

*Rules of Devotion for the Morning.*

**I**N the Morning when you first awake, lift up your Eyes to God, and say, *I lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help.*

**THEN** lift up your Heart to God, and pray, *Lord, keep me from all Sin and Danger this Day, for Jesus Christ his sake.*

**WHEN** you are up, kneel down, and say this Prayer: *Almighty God, who hast touched my heart with a sense of thy fear, and holy dread of thy Majesty, I beseech thee give me thy grace, so to govern my Thoughts, and look to my Words and Ways this Day, that I may avoid all Sins, especially those to which I am most inclin'd, or may be most provoked: That so my Soul and Body may be kept pure, and unspotted before Thee; and whensoever the hour of their Separation shall come, may be ready*  
and

*and prepared for Thee, through the Merits and Mercies of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

WHEN you are ready for your Morning Prayers, you may use the Service before recited for the Morning.

*Rules for the Evening.*

**A**FTER you have used the foregoing Prayers for Evening Service, and before you go into your Bed, kneel down and say this short Prayer: *O God, who hast made the Day for Labour, and the Night for Rest, let thy Son's Blood cleanse me from this Day's Guilt, that I may sleep in thy Peace, and rise again refreshed and preserved by thy Favour, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

AND this Thanksgiving and Prayer: *Almighty God, who hast preserved me this Day from many Sins and Dangers, I do humbly magnify thy Name for thy Grace and Goodness towards me, beseeching Thee to forgive me all the Errors of this Day, whereof my Conscience doth or may accuse*

*me. And grant that those Sins, which by my Frailty I have committed, may by the help of thy Spirit be more carefully avoided; that I may ever stand in thy Favour, walk under thy Protection, and now rest and lye down in thy Peace, and at last come to thy heavenly Kingdom, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ. Amen.*

When you lye down, say,

*I will lay down my Head in Peace, and take my Rest; for thou only, O Lord, makest me to dwell in Safety.*

Then pray thus :

*Lighten mine Eyes, O Lord, that I sleep not in Death : I commit my Soul and Body to thee; keep me for thy Mercies sake. Amen.*

*Some*



*Some General Rules for our Daily Practice.*

1. **R**emember, That tho' Knowledge, especially the Knowledge of God, be an excellent thing, yet it will be no farther available to thee, than as thou puttest it into Practice: For Knowledge without Practice, is like Light without Heat, which never ripens any Fruit to the Glory of God, or Good of thy own Soul. Be sure therefore to labour after the Knowledge of God's Will, and to put that Knowledge into Practice.

2. Let the Worship of God have the first place in thy Affections and Actions. And tho' private Prayer and secret Ejaculations be necessary, yet let not Publick Prayers in the House of God be omitted.

3. Neglect not the Common Prayers, and other Publick Duties of Devotion; but say with holy *David*, *I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the House of the Lord.*

4. Be careful that Divine Service be

performed aright, as it ought to be, and delight thy self in the Beauty of God's House.

5. In all the various Changes that befall thee, especially in Afflictions and Distresses, make Prayer thy Refuge.

6. Set aside appointed Times for thy private Devotions, and observe them not only out of Custom, but of Fervency of Spirit, to increase thy Piety.

7. The pious Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, esteem highly of; I mean those which are not repugnant to God's Word; and on the other side, fly Superstition.

8. Use constantly the Prayers for the Church; and by Name, for all those for whom thou art bound to pray, especially the *Royal Family*.

9. If thou art a Father of a Family, govern all under thy Care, piously and religiously: Let all resort to Morning and Evening Prayer, either Privately or Publickly, if it may be. And let this be a Law to thy Family: Whosoever comes within this House, let him be Sober, Just,

Religious, and Honest in all things: Lie not, Swear not, Forswear, nor Blaspheme not: Detract not from others; mind not Cups and Revels; offend not any bodies Ears, or Eyes, or Mind, either by Words or Deeds. Whoso doth otherwise, let him depart hence.

10. Discipline thy Children betimes, and Train them up in the Way they should go, and when they are old they will not depart from it.

11. Rule thy Wife with Prudence; and provoke her to the Love of Virtue and good Works, by thy Example.

12. If thou hast Daughters, be solicitous about the Preservation of their Chastity; the Age is corrupted, and full of Debauchery; and if they come to be defiled, they are in danger of eternal Ruin; and therefore this requires thy utmost Care, for thou hast no Treasure so much expos'd as these. And to this End, keep with a Double Lock their Ears and Tongue from Obscenity and Scurrility; let none come near them, that use impudent Jest<sup>s</sup> or Gestures; for shameless



Companions and evil Conversation, corrupts good Manners, and ought to be avoided as so many Serpents and Vipers.

13. Be careful to avoid all known Sins : To which End be sure thou commit not the least Fault wittingly, or willingly, for the dearest Friends sake : It is better to renounce all Friendship with Men, than to endanger the breaking of thy Friendship with God. And nothing will break this Friendship sooner than Sin.

14. Use not thy self unto Swearing ; I mean not only vain and prophane Swearing, but also Promisory Oaths : But if thou hast made any such, take care to perform 'em, tho' it may be to thy own outward Hurt.

15. Vow nothing rashly, but upon great Deliberation ; and what thou hast vowed, pay.

16. Imitate the Life of thy blessed Saviour ; and follow the Steps of his Saints in all Things wherein they ought to be imitated.

17. Next after thy Duty to God,  
consider

consider what thou owest to thy Neighbour ; and do it whilst it is in the Power of thy Hand.

18. Do good to all, according to thy Ability : Feed the Hungry, give Drink to the Thirsty, entertain the Stranger, cloath the Naked, visit the Sick, redeem the Prisoner, and bury the Dead. This Charity belongs to the Body.

19. There is likewise a Charity due to the Soul ; which is, To instruct the Ignorant, correct the Sinner, counsel the Doubtful, comfort the Afflicted, endure Injuries, forgive Wrongs, pray for Others, yea, for thy Enemies.

20. Observe Friendship with Constancy, fasten that knot ; and if it be loosed, tie it again. Reconcile those that are fallen out. Strifes and Contentions, which are the Bane of Charity, extinguish and wipe away.

21. Interpret all things from others in the best Sense ; scorn none, nor detract from any ; neither provoke 'em by railing or opprobrious Terms ; but give to all, that Honour that belongs to them.

22. Let

22. Let thy Gesture be without Affectation, yet not Fantastical ; and let thy Countenance be free, but not lofty ; and chearful, but not lowring ; let thy Speech be sober, simple, and harmless, without Deceit or Flattery, and without mimical Actions, like a Stage-play.

23. Be sensible of the Hand of God under all Afflictions ; and think with thy self that he does nothing without a Cause, and let that keep thee humble, and put thee upon a serious Reflection on thy past Actions.

24. If Reproaches, Revilings, and other Injuries be thrown upon thee, strengthen thy Soul in God, and undergo them both with Courage and Constancy ; and, as far as thou art Innocent, with Rejoycing.

25. Under all Afflictions be silent, let the Causes be what they will ; for it argues Impatience to complain : Beware therefore that thou accuse neither Heaven nor Men ; for none is more injurious to thee, than thou to thy self, if thou be Impatient. Righteous is the Lord, and true are his Judgments.

26. Be



26. Be sure take heed, lest under thy Afflictions thou forgettest thy Creator, and seekest Deliverance by indirect Means : For many have stumbled upon this Rock, and been broken to pieces by it : For such Men wou'd prescribe to God, and have him directed by their foolish Fancies : *But who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord ? Or being his Counsellor, hath taught him ?* 'Tis a vain Thing to attempt it. Therefore to be willing to tarry till God sees good to deliver, is the way to hasten our Deliverance ; but to go about to deliver our selves, and throw off the Burden that God has laid upon us, is the only way to bind it on the faster, and to keep back that Deliverance, which ( for ought we know ) may be at the Door. And therefore,

27. If the Times compel thee to suffer for Righteousness sake, be not afraid: The three Children lost nothing by being in the fiery Furnace, so long as there was a Fourth there with them, which was the Son of God.

28. In Times of Affliction especially,  
throw

throw away all vain Desire of Riches ; despise the World, and all the Allurements of it, whether they be Honours, Pleasures, Friends and Acquaintance, or whatever else. That which keeps down thy Affections from mounting to Heaven, and soaring above, is a dead Weight, which thou hadst better be without.

29. Whatever thou lovest, take care to keep thy Innocence : If thou lovest all the World, and keepest thy Innocence, thou may'st yet be a Gainer. But if thou lovest thy Innocence, then indeed thou lovest all, and thy Loss becomes truly unvaluable.

30. If thou would'st preserve thy Innocence, make God's Word thy Rule, and humbly implore the gracious Conduct and Guidance of his holy Spirit : For he it is that leads in the Way of Righteousness, and in the midst of the Paths of Judgment ; and he has assur'd us in his Word, That if in all our Ways we acknowledge him, he will direct our Paths.

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